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**LAST ISSUE**

# Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-143
Wednesday
24 July 1996

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# Daily Report
## Near East & South Asia

*FBIS-NES-96-143* *24 July 1996*

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## Islamic Affairs

### Islamic Affairs: Report on Fundamentalist 'War' on West in Gulf

*JN2007191696 Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 19 Jul pp 16-18*

[Report by Rahimi Afridi in Lahore]

[FBIS Translated Text] About a month ago, in issue No. 1005, AL-WATAN AL—'ARABI wrote this cautionary note: Gulf citizens, unite or your future will be fraught with dangers!

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI's warning was based on a dialogue with a Western official who is well versed in regional affairs. There have been numerous developments since then. The list features increased violence in Bahrain; a network of terrorist plans; the car bombing at al-Khubar housing complex, near Dhahran; and increased tension in Yemen. A few days ago, a friend of AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI's who holds an important position, shared a highly important security report that sends the message that an Islamic war has been proclaimed against the American-Western presence in the region. The report notes that a secret meeting was held in a remote, isolated, and wild mountain region that straddles the borders between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The meeting was attended by leaders or representatives of fundamentalist movements to work out the details of the new war. The report also mentions an earlier session held in Iran to iron out the interpretative differences between the Iranian and Afghan schools of jihad.

The situation is thus very serious and will require a greater degree of alertness and coordination to face the looming danger of terror.

The report, which has been reviewed by AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, is the result of a monitoring and tracking effort involving more than one Western agency. The following is a summary of our efforts:

It was dusk in this rough, mountainous region, and the setting sun rendered it even more difficult to tell whether one was in Pakistani or Afghan territory. But one did know that only a few meters away was the site of the biggest training camp for Afghan Arabs, quite close to the Pakistani border town of "Konli."

On a fairly flat piece of land, a huge tent was pitched near a few anemic trees. Defensive emplacements were clearly recognizable on the surrounding hills. Obviously, they were intended to deter any approaching hostile moves.

The tent was illuminated by a fuel-powered generator, and, as night fell, the light filtering from the windows afforded one a blurry image of people moving about. Four-wheel-drive vehicles suited to such rough terrain began arriving in rapid succession from different directions via tortuous roads. The vehicles would pull up in front of the tent, and their occupants would quickly disembark and enter the tent. Once inside, the men, with their distinctive uniforms, sat on cushions arranged in a circle and began deliberating in the faint light of the paraffin lamp.

Of those present, it was possible to identify Dr. Ayman al- Zahiri, an Egyptian doctor who is now in charge of coordination among fundamentalist groups. Others were representatives of Egyptian and Gulf fundamentalists, including Gulf dissidents from London and Tehran and Beirut. Also represented in that session were the Algerian "salvation" movement, the Pakistani Islamic group, a representative of Afghanistan's Golboddin Hekmatyar, and delegates from Tehran and Khartoum.

The debate got off to a quiet start, with the speakers noting that arrogant forces were now leading a ferocious offensive against Islam. One of them, who seemed to have just come from a European country, presented an in-depth political analysis that indicated a thorough grasp of political issues. He stated that there is a ferocious offensive being readied against Islam under the slogan of an international war against terrorism. Netanyahu's ascendancy in Israel, he continued, has fanned the flames of this impending war. The trend that is now gaining currency, the speaker argued, is to play up the American-Israeli view of the Sharm al-Shaykh summit as a forum to preach peace and combat terrorism. This interpretation, he added, struck a responsive chord at the recent G-7 summit in Lyon.

The speaker declared that there is a need for an Islamic effort to counter the ferocious attack being mounted against Islam behind the smokescreen of combating terror. For this Islamic effort to get off the ground, the Muslims, wherever they are, will have to join hands and set their minor interpretive differences aside in the interest of the larger cause; namely, facing war with war and force with force so that the arrogant may get to learn that Islam has teeth and muscle and that there are Muslims who are prepared to put their lives on the line for their faith.

The rhetoric went down well with the others, with one of the attendees counselling wisdom and reasoning that the coming war would take preparation rather than chants and that there is an imperative need for an integrated plan to deal a fatal blow to the international forces of arrogance.

One of the Gulf dissidents who came from London then took the floor with this statement: Brothers, we have no quarrel over our goal. It is important that you understand

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that the forces of arrogance will not withdraw from our homes unless they are forced to do so. For the forces of arrogance, the Gulf represents an exceedingly important area for their strategic interests, and they are, therefore, building up their efforts and forces in the region. We are dutybound to pool our forces so that we can deal them a blow that will hurt their interests and undermine their position in the region.

The debate continued for two hours or more. Then, when the godfather of the Islamic fundamentalist movement, Usamah Bin-Ladin, entered the tent, all the attendees fell silent. With Bin-Ladin was Afghan strongman 'Abdol Rasul Sayyaf.

As Bin-Ladin stroked his thick beard, Sayyaf began to talk. His tone left the impression that he is in control. His message was that the time to settle accounts has arrived. The forces of arrogance, Sayyaf added, must learn the lesson of al-Khubar blast and pack up and leave, just as they did in Lebanon after the bombings of the U.S. Embassy and Marines headquarters and in Somalia after they lost a few personnel in shoot-outs in Mogadishu.

The Iranian representative was no less extreme or frenzied. We are facing the gravest conspiracy ever. Iran, he asserted, is not the exclusive target of this offensive. All Muslims and faithful are on the receiving end of this plot. We are convinced, the Iranian continued, that attack is the best means of defense. He asked: What nation has not been disgraced by allowing its heartland to be invaded? Just as they came to our region to commit aggression against us, so must we stand up to all the forces of arrogance throughout the Muslim land — and more so in the Gulf region, which is swarming with the "armies of the infidels."

One of the Bahrainis then spoke, noting the "coercion and humiliation we are enduring in the country." He was followed by an Egyptian, who began by castigating Egypt for spurning a Syrian attempt to mediate Cairo's differences with Tehran, attributing the Egyptian refusal of the Syrian effort to his country's toeing the line of the forces of arrogance. "We have to rethink our strategy as we face more difficult circumstances," he advised.

A little before dawn and the end of the meeting, one of the Islamists from London asked Sayyaf: Sir, what do you think? We want your opinion. Sayyaf, in a quiet voice, replied: Let us wait until this evening, when we resume our discussions. After I have heard the opinions of each of you, I will then speak and give my opinion as one who believes in what you believe and who is ready to fight in the same trench as you.

The Egyptian and Iranian delegations were the first to arrive at the tent at nine that evening. In one corner sat the Iranian who is in charge of Jerusalem bureau and Ayman al-Zawahiri. The two were apparently engaged in a long conversation.

It was understood from the dialogue that the Iranian invited al-Zawahiri to visit Tehran to initiate contacts and forge relations with the Iranians. The Egyptian thanked him for the invitation. It was not immediately known whether al-Zawahiri would consult his Egyptian allies before his visit to Tehran, which has the potential to reopen the door to financial cooperation and support.

The other delegates then began to arrive. There were two delegations that had not participated in the first session — a representative of the Lebanese Hizballah and one who had made frequent satellite television appearances during Israel's "Grapes of Wrath" operation in Lebanon, as well as a delegate from the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas. Last to arrive at the tent were 'Abdol Rasul Sayyaf, Usamah Bin-Ladin, and Golboddin Hekmatyar's assistant.

The second meeting proceeded more or less along the same lines as the first one. It was obvious from the tone of the speakers that they had arrived at a final consensus, namely, "to use force to confront all foreign forces stationed on Islamic land."

The decision was a virtual declaration of relentless war. They agreed to form a planning committee; a financing, supply, and mobilization committee; and a higher military committee to oversee implementation of the plan. This last committee would be made up of Arab and other battle-hardened experts, including an Iranian who with experience in Afghanistan.

When it came time to make a decision, Sayyaf leaned in the direction of Hekmatyar's assistant to whisper something that could not be heard by the others. He then stood up and said: I would like to excuse myself as you decide on your recommendations. You know me as a soldier of God and his Messenger and as one who strives to raise the banner and glory of Islam. I wish you good luck and success. I will always be with you.

Nothing has been learned about what happened in the interval between the two meetings. It is not known what drove Sayyaf to back down from the extreme and strident tone that was visible in the first session, in which he appeared to be the new leader of an Islamic international and then took such a low profile and become much quieter at the following meeting.

The important thing was that the political decision had been made and referred to the executive agencies. The report, however, raises a question about Iran's

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participation with a high-level delegation, despite the fact that the groups that move in Afghanistan's orbit have previously shown a reluctance to meet with the Iranians for various reasons related to ideology, jurisprudence, and interpretation. It seems, however, that Hekmatyar's assistant played a considerable role in removing the chill, arguing that the two sides could meet without either renouncing its principles. In other words, the two would, so to speak, accompany each other on the road toward confronting the arrogant international offensive against Islam.

The report also points out that a preliminary meeting was held in Tehran at Iran's initiative. The meeting coincided with the recent Arab summit conference in Cairo and was devoted to an effort to melt the differences within the Islamist fundamentalist movement. The meeting was organized and sponsored jointly by the Iranian Central Intelligence Service and top officers of the Pasdaran; Ahmad Jibril, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command; 'Imad Maghniyyah, official in charge of strategic security in Lebanon's Hizballah; Ahmad Salim, a leading figure of the Egyptian Jihad; and Muhammad 'Ali Ahmad, a Bin-Ladin aide.

The meeting was convened to remove the chill and to set cooperation between Iran and Arab Afghans in motion to present a united front against the Americans. The meeting led to the formation of a coordination body to address and seek to neutralize the points of disagreement and advance the grander strategic objectives.

The report also said: The Tehran meeting led to the talks held at the Afghan-Pakistan border. The report predicts qualitative terrorist attacks against the Western military presence in the Gulf area. The report emphasized that the attacks will not be confined to American targets, but will also be directed against the British and French interests. It is to be recalled that Bin-Ladin has issued public threats against both the British and French.

One section of the report profiles the Afghan Arabs. It notes that a majority of the Afghan Arabs who went to Afghanistan were not involved with the Islamic groups affiliated with Borhannodin Rabbani or Mas'ud or the Hekmatyar-led Hizb-e Eslami. Many of them, however, were associated with very extreme groups, like Ettehad-e Eslami, led by Sayyaf, or "the Princes of Kunar and Nurstan" [umara' kunar wanurstan]. The Princes were led by 'Abdallah 'Azzam, who was killed in 1989. This group is financed by Bin-Ladin, the financial controller under whose stewardship most of the bases in the Afghan- Pakistani mountains were built.

After Afghanistan, Bin-Ladin ran the "Jihad Committee," which ranks as the most important Afghan network and includes the Egyptian Islamic Group and the Jihad Organization in Yemen, which is led by Tariq al-Fadli and backed by 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zindani. This committee runs a center in London under the name of "the Islamic Information Observatory," which organizes the media activity of these organizations. There is also the Advisory and Reformation Body, which has a bureau in London and is presided over by Khalid 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Fawwaz.

Among the parties active within the Jihad Committee are the Pakistani "al-Hadith" group, the Lebanese "Partisans League," the Libyan Islamic Group, Bayt al-Imam Group in Jordan, and the Islamic Group in Algeria.

A good many of the Algerian Salvation Front members have received training in the Partisans' camps in Afghanistan, where Bin-Ladin set up their princedoms [imarat], which currently house more than 10,000 Afghan Arabs.

## Palestinian Affairs

### Palestinian Affairs: 'Abbas Expects 'Arafat-Netanyahu Meeting 'Soon'

*JN2307202096 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mahmud 'Abbas, secretary of the PLO Executive Committee, expects an imminent meeting between President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. After the talks held by President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi in Bayt Hanun in the Gaza Strip today, 'Abbas said: I believe a meeting between President Yasir 'Arafat and Prime Minister Netanyahu will take place soon. He added: The main outcome of today's meeting is the establishment of a framework for the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

### Palestinian Affairs: Commentator Hopes 'Arafat-Levi Meeting Will Answer 'Hot Issues'

*JN2307161096 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1110 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[Political commentary by Ahmad 'Allawi: "We Continue the Negotiations and Review the Calculations and Obligations]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is not a favor, act of heroism, or a coup on the part of the Israeli prime minister to shyly offer to continue the dialogue and negotiations with the Palestinian leadership. Anyone who wants to establish peace, which is a substantive and major issue

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that concerns the international community, must not seek flimsy pretexts and must not threaten to cancel a meeting with the Palestinian leadership without good reasons. Peace must not be subject to the Israeli mood, and the Palestinian leadership is not responsible for Israel's fluctuations. Peace is above all considerations. It is not a favor offered by Israel to anyone. The UN Charter stresses that disputes between countries must be settled through peaceful means, not military force, and that concerned parties are required to engage in elaborate discussions on controversial issues. This is the sound way to arrive at just and honorable solutions.

When Israel approved that rule and accepted the land-for-peace principle, it signed with the Palestinian leadership a series of agreements and declarations of principles and pledged before the world to continue dialogue until all pending problems with the Palestinian are solved. Israel promised to honor timetables for withdrawal from the Palestinian territories. Since the Arab parties met with Israel at the negotiating table, Israel created dozens of obstacles, forgetting the agreements it signed. Every agreement it signed with the Palestinians on any specific issue required dozens of explanatory agreements, seeking to lead the Palestinians to a critical point at which they would be forced by Israeli procrastination to withdraw from the peace process. However, we assure the Israelis that this will never happen.

Today's meeting between the Palestinian leadership and the Israeli Government is to review the agreements that were implemented in the Peres government's era and to agree on the next steps. The Palestinians expect the Israelis to reiterate the futile No's they have memorized. We are confident that Yasir 'Arafat, leader of the Palestinian struggle, will demand an end to this nonsense and evasiveness because it is a waste of time and an explicit conspiracy against the peace process. 'Arafat will most clearly stress his rejection of the Israeli dictates and evasion of international legitimacy and the Madrid terms of reference.

The Palestinian leadership hopes today's meeting will result in definitive and full answers to all hot issues in order to remove the ambiguity shrouding the peace process and to have Israel start meeting the obligations it has put off for so long. Finally, as we continue the negotiations and review the calculations and requirements, we are studying all options for arriving at our legitimate right to the establishment of our independent Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

**Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat, France's De Charette Discuss Peace Process**

*JN2407061396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 24 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat received French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette at the Presidential Office at midnight [2100 GMT] last night. The talks dealt with the latest political developments and the French and European role in supporting the Palestinian people and the peace process.

De Charette said his visit to Orient House was canceled because Faysal al-Husayni, official in charge of the Jerusalem file, is outside the homeland. He said the cancellation does not mean a change in the French stand toward Palestinian rights in occupied Jerusalem.

**Palestinian Affairs: France's De Charette Meets Legislative Council Members**

*JN2307201696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] A meeting was held at the French Consulate in occupied Jerusalem between French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, members of the Palestinian Legislative Council from Jerusalem, and a number of Palestinian political figures.

They discussed the latest political developments and ways to promote the peace process. Discussions also tackled Israel's violations in the holy city, ways to enhance cooperation, and French support for the Palestinian people.

De Charette said his country will increase its efforts to bring about peace in the Middle East and will also make a special initiative to resume peace talks. The French minister, who held talks in Beirut and Amman today, said that Paris will suggest the formation of a consultative group including the United States and the EU to promote the peace process. The French minister also held talks with Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi and his Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz in Beirut.

**Palestinian Affairs: France's De Charette Offers Financial Aid to 'Arafat**

*LD2407095996 Paris LCI Television in French 0900 GMT 24 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] [French Foreign Minister] Herve de Charette is continuing his tour of the Middle East. The foreign minister met with Yasir 'Arafat in Gaza last night.

Herve de Charette told the president of the Palestinian authority that France will give financial support to Palestinian social and education associations in Jerusalem.

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He traveled to Jerusalem this morning, where he held talks with David Levi, his Israeli counterpart, who met with Yasir 'Arafat yesterday.

**Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat To Leave for Damascus 25 Jul**

*JN2307131196 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat will leave for Damascus on Thursday [25 July] for talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to His Excellency President 'Arafat, said the two presidents will hold talks within the context of inter-Arab consultations and coordination. They met in Cairo on 22 June on the sidelines of the recent Arab summit. Abu-Rudaynah added that the meeting between Presidents 'Arafat and al-Asad will take place in the aftermath of the successful Cairo summit to promote inter-Arab coordination.

**Palestinian Affairs: Quray' Urges Resisting Settlement Activity 'By All Means'**

*TA2307145796 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 21 Jul 96 p 7*

[FBIS Translated Text] Ramallah, QUDS PRESS — Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala', speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council [LC], has called on Palestinian residents to resist Jewish settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories by all means. He stressed that what is happening in the arena consututes the slaughter of the peace process.

In an exclusive statement to QUDS PRESS, Abu-'Ala' accused the current Israeli Government of inciting the settlers. He said that it is regrettable that Israel is now starting to incite the settlers, or that the settlers — armed with the current Israeli Government's stance on settlement activity — have begun provocations. He noted that the continuation of this policy, as happened in the village of Qaryut two days ago, leaves no alternative to the Palestinian side but to say no, enough, this is not a peace process. Abu-'Ala' added that there cannot be peace with settlement activity.

Abu-'Ala' affirmed that the LC will hold a special meeting next week to study the dangers of settlement activity and ways of resisting it. He noted the Palestinian side's rejection of Netanyahu's latest statements on settlement activity. Netanyahu said his government's stance on settlement activity has not changed.

**Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Calls Reports on End to Orient House Activity 'Rumors'**

*TA2407093796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 24 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Yasir 'Arafat has described reports that he agreed to Foreign Minister David Levi's demand to stop the activities of the Palestinian Authority [PA] in East Jerusalem, particularly in Orient House, as rumors. Replying to a question, 'Arafat said he could not respond to such a rumor. He was speaking after his meeting in Gaza with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette. [passage omitted]

**Palestinian Affairs: PA Council Secretary Resigns Over Basic Law Debate**

*TA2407070496 Jerusalem JMCC PRESS SERVICE in English 1615 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The secretary of the PA [Palestinian Authority] Legislative Council, Rawhi Fattuh (Fatah-Rafah), submitted his resignation from the council today. He demanded the court trial of two members of parliament, Shaykh Yusuf al-Shanti (Independent-Gaza) and Karam Zarandah (Independent-North Gaza).

Al-Shanti and Zarandah accused Fattuh of "unfair counting" during this morning's vote on whether to begin deliberations on the draft Basic Law from Chapter One or Chapter Two. Al-Shanti and Zarandah disputed the 27-13 vote announced by Fattuh.

Fattuh stormed out of the council after the dispute.

Meanwhile, the council got through articles 11-28 in today's first reading of the draft Basic Law. They will continue the reading through Thursday. The council formed a committee to draft all amendments. The committee is headed by Nahid al-Ris (Fatah- Gaza), the deputy speaker. The other members of the committee are: 'Abd-al-Karim Abu-Salah, Ziyad Abu-Zayyad, 'Azmi al-Shu'aybi, and Ziyad Abu-'Amr.

Tomorrow's meeting begins at 10:30am.

## Arab-Israeli Talks

**Arab-Israeli Talks: Levi, 'Arafat Discuss Peace Process, Related Issues**

*TA2307155296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1440 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[Report by political correspondent Shlomo Raz — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] A few interesting points are indeed emerging from the first dialogue between a senior member of Netanyahu's government and Palestinian

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Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. Foreign Minister David Levi stressed the issue of security throughout the talks, telling 'Arafat: Everything, the entire process and the relationship between Israel and the Palestinians, hinges on this. I have learned that 'Arafat promised to make stronger efforts to fight terror and its infrastructure.

Another issue which featured throughout the meeting was Jerusalem, or what is termed the governmental activity of the Palestinians in Jerusalem, which contravenes the Oslo agreements. Levi demanded that this activity be stopped, and 'Arafat promised to do so. The foreign minister cited the example of today's visit by French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, who will not go to Orient House, and 'Arafat responded: His decision not to visit the place is definitely acceptable to us. In other words, 'Arafat promised not to conduct Palestinian governmental activity in Jerusalem.

Yet another issue was the Palestinian Charter. The foreign minister insisted there can be no vague portions in the decision to abrogate the charter passed by the Palestine National Council. 'Arafat promised to relay as soon as possible written clarifications to Prime Minister Netanyahu about the abrogation of several clauses.

The foreign minister demanded the cessation at once of the activity of the Palestinian security services in Jerusalem, and 'Arafat actually accepted this demand. The kidnapping of Israeli citizen al-Hirbawi came up, and 'Arafat claimed this was related to a church dispute. It was decided to discuss the issue if any disagreements crop up. Levi cautioned, or perhaps even threatened, that if the Palestinian security services fail to stop their activity in Jerusalem Israel, would take steps. Of course, at the same time he proposed entering into a dialogue on the matter.

'Arafat raised the Palestinian claims about violations of the agreements, and admittedly there were quite a few of those. The foreign minister proposed putting aside the complaints of both sides, turning over a new leaf, and setting up a joint body to clarify the alleged complaints about violations on both sides.

With regard to Hebron, it was decided to clarify all aspects of the redeployment in the city. As for the negotiations about the permanent arrangement which should have already begun, the foreign minister said: We have no interest in dragging our feet on this issue. We will set a date for starting the negotiations on the permanent arrangement.

Another issue which featured in the meeting and was in the news this week was the fate of Ilan Sa'adon, an MIA who was kidnapped and murdered. 'Arafat disclosed that he knows somebody in an Arab country who has information on the issue and said he intends to intervene personally to get more information on where the soldier is buried.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1400 GMT carries an interview with PA official Sufyan Abu-Zaydah, who sat in on the meeting. In a recorded passage he says: "No practical or everyday issues were discussed. They spoke in general terms. The atmosphere was very good, exceptional. This only strengthens our feeling that progress can be made."]

**Arab-Israeli Talks: Levi, 'Arafat Comment After Meeting**

*TA2307135096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1238 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[Joint news conference by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasir 'Arafat at the Erez checkpoint — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Arafat, in Arabic] Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi, I thank you for this important meeting which will greatly contribute to advancing the peace process. We discussed many issues, and through him I sent special greetings to Prime Minister Netanyahu. As we agreed, these contacts will continue on all levels in order to advance the peace process in all directions. Once again, I welcome the foreign minister and his delegation. We will work together, side by side, to strengthen the relations between us to the benefit of the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples. We have a great deal of work to do together. Once again, I welcome you. Welcome.

[Levi] I would like to thank the chairman and his team of aides for their hospitality. We were able to conduct open and candid talks. We touched upon many issues. We decided to formalize our relations and set up the appropriate frameworks to clarify and advance the issues. I experienced understanding and a strong desire to cooperate and uphold the rule of thumb of the negotiations, which is to advance toward the peace we yearn for. I have no doubt that what we established today will promote the process designed to bring peace to Israel and the Palestinians, which is good news to all peace-seekers.

We decided to work together toward the reciprocal implementation of what has been agreed upon and to conduct an open dialogue to solve delicate problems and issues. I would like to point out the openness, frankness, and responsibility which I encountered in this important talk we held today. I believe we will advance and ensure the healthy foundations of the goal we both yearn for.

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Once again, I want to thank you for your hospitality, openness, and the responsibility which accompanied us throughout our talk. I think we overcame obstacles and set goals in an agreed-upon and secure way which will ensure the yearned-for peace. Once again, thank you very much on behalf of my colleagues and on my own behalf.

[Political correspondent Shlomo Raz] I would like to pose the same question to both Minister Levi and Chairman 'Arafat: How did you feel in your first meeting? Didn't you feel awkward? Wasn't it difficult to shake hands?

['Arafat, in English] Open hearts.

[Raz] Mr. Foreign Minister, how did you feel when first meeting Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat?

[Levi] When the goal is the future, and seeing as there is a decision to work together, a common effort was made by both sides to overcome obstacles and set an agreed-upon course, which is what we did.

[Indistinct question in Arabic by Arye Gus]

['Arafat, in Arabic] We agreed to follow up on this successful, positive, and constructive dialogue on all levels in order to solve all pending issues, including the issues you mentioned.

[Unidentified TV Channel 2 correspondent, in English] Will you be ready to renew negotiations about the agreement in Hebron? Will you be ready to get any [words indistinct]?

['Arafat, in English] First of all, you have to understand that what had been agreed upon is enough and all the security measures have been mentioned in it, including the international presence to help us for these security matters.

[Indistinct question in English]

['Arafat, in English] Very soon.

[Indistinct question, in English]

['Arafat, in English] Very soon. We will agree upon when it will happen and we will be in permanent contact to agree upon the level and the place.

[Unidentified WAFA correspondent, in Arabic] President Abu-'Ammar, in the wake of this meeting will Palestinian citizens find a positive difference between the Likud and Labor governments, especially on the withdrawal from Hebron, the settlements, the closure [words indistinct]?

['Arafat, in Arabic] We are not talking about Likud or Labor. We respect the Israeli people's democratic choice and we deal with the Israeli Government. Therefore, we will follow up on this peace process together with open hearts.

[Unidentified correspondent, in English] Mr. President, could you describe for us the atmosphere of the meeting and how important is it that you meet you with Prime Minister Netanyahu himself and when this is likely to happen?

['Arafat, in English] The meeting was very fruitful and constructive and positive, and as I have mentioned, with open hearts. And I have to thank His Excellency for this spirit which was covering this meeting, and we hope that we'll continue in the same attitude. I convey through His Excellency my best wishes for His Excellency the prime minister. [correspondent reports Levi and 'Arafat shake hands]

**Arab-Israeli Talks: 'Arafat's Adviser Comments on Levi-'Arafat Talks**

*JN2307203796 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi agreed to form a high-level Palestinian-Israeli committee to follow up on resuming peace negotiations and resolving pending issues.

During the joint news conference held with Levi after their meeting today, President 'Arafat said they agreed to continue to hold positive dialogue and contacts at all levels to resolve outstanding issues and move ahead with the permanent solution negotiations.

Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, President Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, said today's meeting is the first official political contact between the new Israeli Government and the Palestinian National Authority. He said this meeting will soon be followed by several other meetings at the political and economic levels to continue discussions and resolve various issues.

In a statements to Voice of Palestine, Abu-Rudaynah said the Palestinian teams and committees are now ready to resume the final-status negotiations in accordance with the Oslo agreement. Nabil Abu-Rudaynah said the Israeli foreign minister asserted his government's adherence to the peace process and the implementation of the agreements.

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**Arab-Israeli Talks: 'Abbas—'Arafat, Levi To Resume Final-Status Talks**

*JN2407072896 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 24 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] PLO Executive Committee Secretary Mahmud 'Abbas, Abu-Mazin, said President 'Arafat's meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi yesterday resulted in an agreement to reactivate the higher committees on negotiations and the final-status committees and to resume the final status negotiations.

In a statement to Voice of Palestine today, Abu-Mazin said: The Israeli Government will soon inform us about the level and membership of their committees and when they will be prepared for negotiations.

'Abbas added that during the meeting, the Palestinian side called for abiding by what has been agreed upon and for the implementation of all the issues of the transitional stage in preparation for the final solution negotiations, noting that the Palestinian side's rejection of returning the negotiations to square one. 'Abbas, however, stressed Israel's [as heard] readiness to resume the negotiations and the peace process at the same place they stopped.

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## Egypt

### Egypt: Paper Notes Role of Mubarak U.S. Visit, Talks With Clinton

*NC2407062696 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0502 GMT 24 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 24 Jul (MENA)—AL-AHRAM has stated that Arab, regional, and international circles are watching with great interest President Husni Mubarak's visit to the United States. The trip is a continuation of Mubarak's steps and contacts so far to rescue the regional peace process following the stances adopted by the Israeli Likud Party and its leader Binyamin Netanyahu against the principles and bases of the peace process, which have been fixed since the Madrid peace conference.

AL-AHRAM clarifies in its comment today that President Mubarak's steps to rescue the peace process started by convening Arab minisummits, followed by the Cairo Arab summit, and then the Cairo summit between President Mubarak and Netanyahu.

The paper adds that President Mubarak's talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton and responsible officials in his administration, as well as Congress leaders, will be very important to dot the i's and cross the t's of the peace march and the U.S. role in it.

AL-AHRAM says the Mubarak-Clinton talks will address ways to strengthen Egyptian-U.S. relations toward greater political, economic, and technological cooperation in the interest of Egypt's people, who aspire to strength, progress, and prosperity.

### Egypt: U.S. Pressure Against Egypt, Syria Viewed

*NC2307180796 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 17 Jul 96 p 11*

[Article by Salah al-Din Hafiz: "Extortion Through Terrorism and Pressure Through Aid"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Binyamin Netanyahu has charmed the Americans, particularly the policy and decision makers, who expressed their support and admiration for him with much enthusiasm and infatuation. Contrary to this admiration for his logic of force, hard-line policy, and fanaticism, a heavy stick strongly hit the backs of the Arabs, not only because they dared to hold a meeting in Cairo to discuss their current and future affairs but basically because they voiced resentment against the policy of extremism and arrogance of power declared by Netanyahu. Netanyahu has said no to withdrawal from the Arab territories, no to a Palestinian state, and no to discussion of Jerusalem or recognition of the land-for-peace principle. Instead, he offered peace in exchange for Israel's peace and security.

In the face of an absolute U.S. backing for Israel at the political, economic, military, and security levels, the U.S. promises to the Arabs have receded and even collapsed one after the other. We now notice that the mighty U.S. machine has started a pressure campaign against the Arabs. This campaign varies in strength between diplomatic pressure that is soft in appearance but tough in substance to provocative and blatant pressure, something that shows a change in the rules of the game of negotiations!

If we disregard the soft pressure we cannot ignore the flagrantly provocative and extorting pressure that is obvious to everybody. Egypt and Syria have been named as targets in this offensive, for they are the two most important countries that play a major role in reuniting the Arabs, unifying their efforts, and preserving their very entity, which is threatened with melting into the new surroundings. From this premise, the rabid campaign against the Arabs has been stepped up on two major fronts:

First, an extensive offensive against Syria, which is Netanyahu's stumbling block in the future peace talks, this front opened with an extensive smear campaign against Syria as a state sponsoring terrorism in the region. Syria was accused of being involved in the al-Khubar explosion in Saudi Arabia and Netanyahu has called for the establishment of a solid and united U.S.-Israeli front to command a war against the terrorism sponsored by Syria, Iran, Iraq, and maybe Libya.

As much as we understand that this Israeli-U.S. campaign against Syria seeks to terrify the Syrians, curtail their Arab and regional role, and soften their hard-line stance in any future negotiations with the Netanyahu government, which has turned its back against all the previously applicable negotiating rules, we equally expect this pressure to be stepped up, not only to soften Syria's stand toward Israel but also to disengage its close alliance with Egypt and the two countries' coordination with Saudi Arabia to form an active tripartite Arab command front. While Syria's unwavering stance over the full restoration of the occupied Syrian and Lebanese territories under the land-for-peace principle disturbs the Israeli-U.S. alliance, what disturbs it more is to see the Arabs regaining part of their solidarity and common action under an active Egyptian- Syrian leadership. For sooner or later this will inevitably lead to a collision with the Israeli-U.S. ambitions.

The second front is the extensive offensive against Egypt, which is a seasonal offensive that gains momentum for certain reasons and then abates for reasons that

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are not understood. However, it is always hanging over Egypt's head like Damoclean sword, in the old Greek mythology.

The card of exerting pressure on Egypt's nerves with the files of human rights, the slackening in the democratic process, the stalling of economic reform, and corruption has been exhausted for several reasons and has therefore lost its primary effect to a large extent. The extortion card of threatening to stop U.S. aid to Egypt — $2.1 billion a year — remains the main pressure card with some spices added to it from time to time, such as accusing Egypt of inciting the Arabs to achieve solidarity, impeding normalization with Israel, starting a dialogue with Iran and Sudan, violating the international sanctions on Iraq and Libya, and other such feeble pretexts.

But the issue of foreign aid has become a major card in the political balance and in electoral competition in the United States. The U.S. Congress with its Republican majority has pressured Clinton's Democratic administration to reduce all foreign aid to $12 billion only in 1996 and wants to reduce it still further in the 1997 budget.

Israel alone gets $3 billion, while Egypt gets $2.1 billion from the overall foreign aid. Hence pressure on them could become strong since both these countries are together getting just under half of this aid. But since Israel is exempted from pressure because it is a very special case of love, all the pressure is directed toward Egypt in the form of threats to reduce or cut off aid with the aim of strangling it just when its economy is facing a critical time.

Very frankly, we must address ourselves very clearly on this issue, which has become a source of irritation and extortion. We must prepare well to face the moment of truth when this aid, which was decided on after the peace agreement with Israel in 1979 as part of the price for this peace and for maintaining it, will be cut off. It is now clear that the United States is moving toward reducing its foreign aid year after year. It will stop its aid to Egypt — $2.1 billion, of which $850 million is economic aid and the rest is military aid — at a moment of weakness or at a moment of facing the truth.

When we ask ourselves to face the moment of truth, we must have two facts backed by figures before our eyes:

1. Documented scientific studies have proved that 60 percent of this aid returns to the United States through its experts and their high salaries and by dictating the way it is spent and forcing us to import from the United States and ship the imports on U.S. means of transport. This means that only 40 percent of this aid comes to us, even if we suppose it is spent wisely, while Israel gets the $3 billion in cash and without the conditions that are imposed on us.

2. While recognizing the role of the U.S. aid in bolstering our economy, though we do not benefit from it in the right way, losing this aid will not be a catastrophe that will cause us to collapse. This is because of the noticeable improvement in the economic conditions, the encouragement of other sources of revenue either through tourism, the Suez Canal, exports, and oil, and the activation of our cooperation with other Arab and European countries.

We must even understand that the remittances of Egyptian expatriates have reached $5 billion in nine months only, according to official figures published in June 1996, that is more than double this U.S. aid.

All this means that the U.S. aid card is not a pressure card anymore and should not be so under any circumstance. We must take the initiative ourselves in doing away with its pressure so that the absurd extortion will not continue to upset our lives and compel us to bow our heads and swallow our distress.

**Egypt: U.S. Failure To Support Butrus-Ghali Blamed on Elections**

*NC2307161096 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 17 Jul 96 p 11*

[Editorial: "An Example of Success... But"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The United States is daily asserting that it will refuse the renomination of Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali to the post of UN secretary general. At the same time that Washington is reiterating its position on Ghali's second term, it is asserting that the UN secretary general has made good achievements for the international organization, which cannot be denied.

Since the UN secretary general has made good achievements that cannot be denied, this confirms that there are bad and dishonest motives behind the U.S. stand against Butrus-Ghali, especially as precedents show that each secretary general served two consecutive terms, the maximum that any secretary general can serve. So why does the United States want to deny Dr. Burtrus-Ghali a natural right since he has served the international organization and since he is a man of achievement?

We believe that it will be difficult for Dr. Butrus-Ghali to withdraw from the confrontation just because the United States — which has a veto in the Security Council — has said no to his reelection. Doing so would simply mean that he was a failure in his international position and such a quick withdrawal would mean that

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he has done something bad that he does not want to make public. There is nothing of the sort. The man is an example of success, performance, and achievement in Egypt. He had hundreds of successful experiences at the international level when he was a high level official in his country. His successful experiences continued in his post as UN secretary general as testified by the United States and all other countries.

It seems that Dr. Butrus-Ghali is unlucky because the time for his reelection coincides with the U.S. presidential elections, which is a period of paralysis in the U.S. Administration, a period that benefits Israel and the Jews who exercise control and electoral influence.

**Egypt: Editorial Criticizes Israel's Settlement Policy**

*NC2307172696 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 17 Jul 96 p 11*

[Editorial: "Israeli Settlement Policy Is an Anti-Peace Action"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a new challenge to a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Jewish Settlements Council has announced a plan to build eight new settlements in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967. The move is an attempt to intensify the process of Judaizing Palestinian territories in order to impose a new de facto situation that violates all of the Palestinian people's rights to their land. Actually, this settlement plan is part of a wave of extremism by the Israeli authorities toward a settlement with Syria and toward the bases for achieving peace with the Arabs in general.

The Arab countries chose to show their desire for peace and did not resort to hardline stands on Netanyahu and his government so as to give them an opportunity to demonstrate Israel's new intentions regarding peace. However the intentions exhibited so far in their statements and measures go completely counter to the requirements for achieving a peaceful and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. They are also void of any appreciation of the wise Arab stand that appeared at the Cairo Arab summit last month. That stand involved general principles for bringing about peace without confronting the Israeli stands or anticipating Netanyahu's position.

If the new Israeli government truly desires a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict in a comprehensive way by establishing stability in the region, which serves Israel's interests more than any other country, the road to this solution does not pass through settlements and extremism. Rather it requires forthright progress toward a peaceful solution based on the Security Council and UN resolutions regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict. A rush toward further settlement and extremism opens the doors to evil and hell in the region; it is in the interest of all the regional countries, primarily Israel, to avert this development.

**Egypt: Sudan Refuses To Hand Over 'Fugitive Terrorists'**

*NC2307134496 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 16 Jul 96 p 1*

[Report by Muhammad 'Abd-al-Fattah: "Sudan Refuses To Hand Over Fugitive Terrorists to Egypt. Egyptian Security Delegation Returns Following Failure of Its Mission in Khartoum"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Sudanese authorities have refused to hand over the Egyptian fugitive terrorists in Sudan. The Egyptian security delegation, which travelled to Khartoum last week, failed to reach an agreement with the Sudanese side on handing over the fugitive defendants and on exchanging information on the fugitive leaders inside Sudanese camps and territories.

A security source confirmed that the Egyptian delegation returned after Sudanese officials refused to facilitate its mission.

The Egyptian and Sudanese sides agreed during the recent Arab summit in Cairo on handing over fugitive terrorists and exchanging information on their presence inside Sudanese camps.

## Libya

**Libya: 'Purge Committees' Raid Largest Oil Company**

*MM2407110996 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Jul 96 pp 1, 4*

[Report by Sawsan Abu-Husayn: "Libyan Purge Committees Begin Sweep Campaign Against Oil Companies"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — An informed Libyan source has said that a group from the revolutionary "purge committees" yesterday raided the Libyan Oasis Oil Company, the largest oil company operating in Libya. It is owned by the National Petroleum Corporation.

The source said that the committees expelled all employees and closed the main offices at the company's headquarters in 'Umar al-Mukhtar Street near Tripoli International Exhibition Center. As is known, the Oasis Company produces some 500,000 barrels of oil a day. The source said that the company's closure could lead

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to profound disruption to the operations of the largest oil company in Libya.

The same source said that on the same day other groups from the revolutionary "purge committees" raided the Oil Research Center in Tripoli, a branch of the National Petroleum Corporation which is responsible for oil research and studies.

The source added that the reactions of other oil companies, such as the Arabian Gulf Oil Company in Banghazi and the Surt Oil Company, are not known, nor is their fate or whether they too will be raided.

The sources expect Sayf-al-Islam, Colonel al-Qadhdhafi's son, to emerge as a prominent figure in the running of oil sectors, which he started to unofficially supervise several years ago.

The committees in question, whose formation was ordered by Col. al-Qadhdhafi three months ago, is comprised of low-ranking Army officers and some revolutionary elements loyal and close to al-Qadhdhafi.

While official sources made no reference to the incident, they said that "the purge committees' aim is to protect the national economy, eliminate corruption and bribery, achieve stability and security, and confront the instances of plunder perpetrated by atheists from time to time, and also to confront drug smugglers."

**Libya: Opposition Leader Claims 'Hundreds' Dead in 5 Jul Prison Mutiny**

*NC2307202296 Paris AFP in English 1931 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, July 23 (AFP) — A mutiny in a Libyan jail containing political prisoners left hundreds dead among guards and detainees, the Libyan opposition in Cairo said Tuesday [23 July].

"According to information from Libyans who have travelled to Egypt, the mutiny which erupted on July 5 in Bu Salim prison near Tripoli left hundreds dead among political prisoners and officers," an opposition leader told AFP, asking not to be named.

The opposition in exile said last week that eight political prisoners had died in the week-long protest.

The opposition leader said the violence began when dozens of prisoners went on hunger strike to protest poor conditions. They then captured guards who tried to flog them and went on to free hundreds of prisoners from their cells.

A special security unit was sent to the prison in tanks and bombarded it with missiles as prisoners tried to scale the prison walls, he added.

"There was a real massacre, but dozens of prisoners did manage to escape," he said, adding that the bodies of those killed were dumped in the sea under orders from Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

He said Bu Salim prison held thousands of political prisoners, many implicated in a 1993 coup attempt, and Islamic militants.

## Sudan

**Sudan: Government Forces Repulse Attack From Eritrea on 21 Jul**

*EA2307170696 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1430 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 23 Jul (SUNA) — The armed forces have managed to repulse a treacherous attack mounted by forces from deep within Eritrea last Sunday [21 July]. The forces, supported by armored vehicles, attacked Jabal Abu-(Qamal) station, situated on the border with Eritrea.

An official Army source said the armed forces chased remnants of the enemy forces who withdrew inside the Eritrean border leaving behind their (?dead).

**Sudan: 'Crisis' in Islamic Extremists' Relationship With Khartoum**

*MM2307142696 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 22 Jul 96 p 1*

[Report by Kamal Bakhit in Khartoum and AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in London: "Silent Crisis Between Khartoum and the 'Groups' After Families of Bin-Ladin, al-Zawahiri, and the 'Afghans' Were Forcibly Expelled"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Suppressed anger against Sudan and Sudanese leader Hasan al-Turabi prevails nowadays among the Arab Islamic extremist groups, because of his sudden about-face against them and the expulsion of most of their cadres from his national territory in a manner which has been described as "non-Islamic."

A senior Islamic source close to the "Arab Afghans" said that the Sudanese Government was not satisfied with expelling and displacing those who took refuge there over the past seven years, but has also started to forcibly expel those people's families and children, in a "violation" of the agreement with them that these families would not be harmed while the "mujahidin" were putting their affairs in order.

The source said that most "Arab Afghans" were forced to leave for Somalia, Afghanistan, and other Islamic states in response to pressures by the Sudanese Government, which they accuse of "having abandoned all its

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slogans and pledges and yielded to U.S. and Egyptian pressures."

The source said that, last week, the Sudanese Government gave the order to expel the family of Ayman al-Zawahiri, one of the leaders of the Islamic Group which is banned and wanted by justice in Egypt. It also expelled the family of Shaykh Usamah Bin-Ladin, the famous Saudi millionaire and leader of the Saudi opposition Advice Movement, accused of financing most Islamic movements in the Arab homeland.

Shaykh Bin-Ladin gave an interview to Britain's THE INDEPENDENT newspaper from his new base in Afghanistan, surrounded by many of his supporters who were forced to leave Sudan.

Sudanese-Egyptian and Sudanese-Saudi relations have recently seen much improvement following the decision to expel the Arab mujahidin.

AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI has learned that last year's attack on a Khartoum mosque was carried out by one of the Arab Afghan mujahidin groups which accuse Dr. al-Turabi of abandoning the group's thinking and are demanding that he and his followers be repudiated.

It seems that this attack and the casualties it caused were behind the Sudanese Government's decision to take practical steps to expel these people.

Sources close to Shaykh Bin-Ladin have accused the Sudanese Government of not honoring its commitments to repay the debts it owes for the road building project which his companies in Sudan have carried out, estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars.

Meanwhile, Sudanese opposition leaders have begun consultations in Asmara in preparation for a National Democratic Grouping meeting to examine the recent developments in the Sudanese issue. [passage omitted]

**Sudan: Government Approves Resumption of Aid Flights to South**

*EA1807223196 Nairobi KNA in English 1845 GMT 18 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Khartoum, 18 Jul (KNA-PANA) — The Sudanese Government has authorized the use of C-130 aircraft for the delivery of urgent relief supplies to the country's war torn south, the official daily AL INQAD AL-WATANI, reported Wednesday [17 July], reports PANA.

Khartoum had barred the delivery of relief supplies to the south by aircraft after accusing some organizations involved in ferrying of taking arms and ammunition to the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) which has been fighting the central government in Khartoum since 1983.

"Sudan has allowed the use of C-130 planes for transporting of, repeat, transportation of relief," the state minister at the Ministry of Social Planning Majdhub al-Khalifah was quoted as saying Wednesday by the official SUDAN NEWS AGENCY (SUNA).

"Other planes will soon start flights for the transportation of relief and other materials within the context of the UN-sponsored operation lifeline Sudan". [passage omitted]

**Sudan: Government Launches 'Major' Offensive in Nuba Mountains**

*EA2207145796 Kampala Radio Uganda Network in English 0700 GMT 22 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Government of Sudan has launched a major military offensive in the Nuba Mountains in an attempt to crush rebels based in the region. [A] correspondent in the operation zone in the mountains said the troops of the Islamic regime in Khartoum have ransacked villages, burning houses, destroying crops and livestock in order to deny rebels food and contact to the civilian population. Thousands of civilians are said to have fled the area in fear of the rampaging and looting government troops.

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**Iraq: Iraqi UN Spokesman Says 'No Intention' of Hindering Inspectors**

*MM2307150896 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Jul 96 p 1*

[Report by Raghidah Dirgham in New York: "Washington Wants a Strong Response to Iraq's Hindering of the Inspection Teams"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The U.S. mission at the United Nations has been directed to make the Security Council issue "a strong response" to the fact that the Iraqi authorities denied the international inspection teams access to the locations that they wished to inspect. [passage omitted]

Ambassador Nizar Hamdun, Iraqi representative to the United Nations, said that "Iraq had no intention of hindering the inspection operations. Instead, it is in Iraq's interest that these are carried out as quickly as possible, in order to allow implementation of Article 22 of Resolution 687" which links the total lifting of the oil embargo on Iraq to Iraq's implementation of all the [UN] Special Commission [UNSCOM] requirements.

Hamdun added: "There have been many other successful visits (by the inspection teams). However, what happened was due to complications regarding the area, which includes a key location, and because of measures adopted by UNSCOM in not giving Iraq prior notice of the locations which it intends to visit. That is why we were unable to find out which location they wanted to visit and provide a suitable alternative access route, instead of the road which goes through a key location."

Hamdun added that there were two elements in the agreement between the two sides, namely UNSCOM's right to free, unrestricted, and unconditional access to locations without prior notice, and Iraqi sovereignty rights as well as considerations about national security and key locations. He said: "When there is conflict between the two issues, there are problems." [passage omitted]

**Iraq: Oppositionists Say UNSCOM Inspectors Entered Saddam Palace**

*MM2407092896 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Jul 96 p 2*

[Unattributed report: "International Inspectors Enter One of Saddam Husayn's Palaces Near Baghdad"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] London, Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Iraqi opposition sources have revealed that experts of the [UN] Special Commission (UNSCOM) entrusted with dismantling weapons of mass destruction in Iraq entered a palace belonging to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn in the al-Radwaniyah district, west of Baghdad, and that they inspected it in search of prohibited materials or documents the Iraqi leadership is suspected of hiding in this palace.

The sources said that a team of eight experts headed by the Russian Nikita Smidovich spent six hours in the Iraqi president's palace, called "Saqr al-Qadisiyah," on Saturday following an agreement between UN experts and the Iraqi Government at the end of last week, stipulating that the names of the inspected sites and government establishment should not be revealed. Citing UNSCOM sources, the Iraqi opposition sources said that the team found nothing in the palace concerning prohibited materials or documents, but it discovered several long tunnels and corridors under the building and thus more time and experts are needed to inspect these tunnels.

The Iraqi authorities did not allow UNSCOM members into the palace in question last week on the grounds that it is a presidential palace. But contacts made by the commission's head, Rolf Ekeus, with Iraqi officials, especially Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, resulted in UN inspectors being allowed to enter and inspect the palace.

The Iraqi sources expect UNSCOM to include other presidential palaces and sites belonging to the special security organ on the list of sites to be inspected, relying on the fact that it is authorized under agreements with the Iraqi Government to inspect any site suspected of containing prohibited materials. [passage omitted]

**Iraq: UN Informed of U.S., UK, French Airspace 'Violations'**

*JN2407062196 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1150 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 23 Jul (INA)— Iraq informed the United Nations of the continued violations of its airspace by the U.S., UK, and French planes, which carried out acts of surveillance and acts of provocation between 1 and 15 July.

Iraq's permanent UN representative said in a message sent to UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali that those planes had carried out 708 missions above the northern and southern areas. The message said U.S. surveillance planes violated the Iraqi airspace above the southern area and then headed toward Kuwait. Iraq's permanent UN representative urged the UN secretary general to intervene and ask the three countries to stop these acts, which jeopardize Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Such acts, he said, are a flagrant violation of the UN Charter and the provisions of international law.

Iraq's representative pointed out that such acts terrify civilians and cause material damage to private and public property. He stressed Iraq's right to demand legal compensation for the damages sustained by the Iraqi Republic and people.

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**Israel: Netanyahu Reiterates Demand For PA To Thwart Terror Attacks**

*TA2307133996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu says that, for him, the principle of reciprocity in the context of adhering to agreements is not a stalling tactic to hold up the political process. Speaking at today's session of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Netanyahu said he wants to promote the peace process, but it depends on adherence to each and every commitment. We will not revert to a situation in which terrorist attacks are perpetrated while the Palestinian Authority [PA] turning a blind eye. We expect the PA to thwart terrorist attacks. We will not tolerate a situation in which the PA exerts no effort, Netanyahu said. This report was filed by our correspondent Yo'el Nir.

**Israel: Netanyahu on Hebron, Settlements, Lebanon, Jerusalem**

*TA2307154596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu says the meeting between Foreign Minister Levi and PLO leader 'Arafat was extremely important in setting up the mode of dialogue between the government and the self-rule authority.

Netanyahu said internal discussions on the redeployment in Hebron would be concluded by the end of the week. He said a decision on the matter would be based on two principles: Israel's sensitivity in the area of security and Israel's intent to honor agreements signed with the PLO. He said the matter of Hebron is not simple, and dealing with it improperly could sabotage the entire process.

The prime minister appeared before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and said that, regarding the permanent settlement agreement with the Palestinians, the Israeli Government has a different approach. We are against an independent Palestinian state, but this should not prevent us from holding negotiations, Netanyahu said.

On Jewish settlements, the prime minister said he differentiates between political promises and things that were stated in a contract. Netanyahu said that the current government believes in the principle that Jews should be able to settle wherever they want. He added that no settlement plan has been completed.

The prime minister said the purpose of his recent trip to Egypt was to ease tension between the two countries. Netanyahu said that Egyptian President Mubarak had gotten the impression that Israel was not interested in continuing the peace process. After their talks, the Egyptian leader was convinced that Israel means what it says regarding the peace process.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu said the situation in south Lebanon is worsening, and he described it as a war of attrition. Netanyahu said the matter is at the top of the government's priorities. He criticized Syria, saying its approach to the peace process is mistaken. Damascus believes that if they pressure us with threats of widespread terror, we will be more flexible, Netanyahu said. But if I were in their place, I would seek ways to build confidence between Syria and the Israeli public. Netanyahu said Israel is interested in stability in Lebanon and Syria.

[A related report by Knesset affairs correspondent Hadar Vismonsky on Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1400 GMT on 23 July cites Netanyahu as saying at the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee: "Foreign Minister David Levi's meeting with PA chief Yasir 'Arafat underscores the government's commitment to the agreements." Netanyahu added: "I have not set a meeting with 'Arafat, but I will consider doing so if it is of supreme importance for Israel. He said today's meeting does not constitute a violation of the Likud's pledges to its constituency." In a recorded passage, Netanyahu says: "This encounter's importance lies, first and foremost, in the fact that it shows we are fulfilling our promises to our voters. I said we would hold contacts with the PA, and that they would evolve into meetings on the ministerial level. We are doing exactly what I said we would." Vismonsky adds: "Netanyahu said a terrorist attack would not necessarily stop the peace process. Only a PA- sponsored attack will stop the process, but one perpetrated by a single knife-wielding man would not."]

**Israel: Defense Minister To Meet 'Arafat 'Apparently' Next Week**

*TA2407084596 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 24 Jul 96 p 3*

[Report by Ben Kaspit]

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Mordekhay will be the next minister to meet with Yasir 'Arafat. This meeting will apparently take place as soon as next week. Immediately after that meeting, the head of the Palestinian Authority will meet with Finance Minister Dan Meridor.

In this way, the prime minister's aides want to create a "process of meetings" that will gradually build up to a meeting between 'Arafat and Netanyahu himself.

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Yesterday, one of Netanyahu's associates assessed that such a meeting will be held "within several weeks." Another associate, however, ruled out the possibility of such a meeting in the near future "unless deemed necessary by circumstances."

In the last two cabinet sessions, after it transpired that he would be the first minister to meet with 'Arafat, David Levi clarified his position to the ministers: "I will not represent myself alone at this meeting. It is not a personal mission. I am going on behalf of each of you individually and all of you together. This is not a case of the good, the bad, and the ugly. We are all serving in one government."

**Israel: Levi Urges al-Asad To Take New Approach, Hold Direct Talks**

*TA2407085796 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 24 Jul 96 p 2*

[Report by Shim'on Schiffer and David Regev]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Foreign Minister David Levi relayed a message to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday: "The manner in which the negotiations between Israel and Syria have been conducted to date has proved futile, and now we must find a different, direct approach. Therefore, I propose that you meet with me." This message, calling for a meeting anywhere al-Asad chooses, was delivered by Levi to Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in their meeting at the Erez checkpoint yesterday. 'Arafat departs tomorrow for a meeting with the Syrian president in Damascus, after three years in which no contacts have been held between them. It has been learned that Levi relayed to al-Asad another message whose contents have not been revealed yet. [passage omitted]

**Israel: Levi Meets de Charette, Defends Meeting With 'Arafat**

*TA2407093896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 24 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister David Levi has said that he and Prime Minister Netanyahu are pleased with the outcome of yesterday's meeting with Yasir 'Arafat. Levi rejected the criticism voiced by Likud members about the meeting and lashed out at those who support a sit-and-do-nothing policy. The foreign minister was speaking in Jerusalem after meeting with his French counterpart. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Herve de Charette said he intends to intervene personally to bring about a resumption of the talks between Israel and Syria.

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**Jordan: France's de Charette on Bilateral Ties, Orient House Issue**

*JN2307190096 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[Report on news conference by French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette in Amman on 23 July—recorded; de Charette speaks in French with passage-by-passage translation into Arabic]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] As part of the French efforts in the Middle East, and on the third leg of his Middle East tour, French Foreign Minister Herve De Charette began his visit to Jordan today. [passage omitted]

During a news conference before he departed, the French foreign minister asserted that the Jordanian, French, and European positions are identical. He pointed out that Jordan plays a significant role, particularly at this stage in which new developments have emerged after the Israeli election.

[Begin recording] [De Charette] Today's talks occur after the telephone calls between Mr. Chirac and His Majesty King Husayn. We discussed bilateral relations, of course, and we discussed the solid political dialogue that exists between our two countries. We agreed with Mr. al-Kabariti that we will remain in close contact during the next few weeks in order to monitor the situation in the region.

We also discussed economic issues and talked about French financial aid to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. We talked about our agreement to transform part of the Jordanian debts into investments. We spoke about the negotiations currently under way between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the EU to reach a partnership agreement. We talked about negotiations on the (Leda) European program.

I was also happy to see that Jordan supports all of the initiatives launched within the framework of the European-Middle East partnership that emanated from the Barcelona conference. Perhaps you know that the Jordanian, French, and European positions are very close, rather identical. I believe that Jordan has a very important role to play, particularly with respect to the new situation that emerged after the Israeli elections. I believe that Jordan is unique, because it has always been a moderate state. This can be attributed to the wisdom of the Jordanian leaders, headed by His Majesty the king.

[Kassab Samawi] Kassab Samawi, Jordan Television. Your excellency the foreign minister. Will you visit Orient House during your visit to Israel, and do you support the presence of Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem, particularly since the Jerusalem issue will be discussed during the final-status negotiations? Thank you.

[De Charette] You have asked me a specific question, and I will give you a more specific answer. France has not changed its stand at all. The final status of Jerusalem will not be defined now but at the end of the negotiations on the Jerusalem issue, which have not started yet. We are aware that this is not an easy subject. However, the status of Jerusalem will not be decided by one side or one party. Based on this spirit, France respects and appreciates the Palestinian presence in east Jerusalem. Therefore, we have always been careful to accord the Orient House our true consideration. It is a Palestinian institution, among other institutions representing the Palestinian life in east Jerusalem.

The French stand has not changed at all. It is the same today as it was yesterday and as it will be tomorrow. However, from the practical viewpoint, Mr. Faysal al-Husayni, whom I have known as a friend for a long time, and I hold him in high regard, will not be in Jerusalem today. Thus, I will not visit Orient House, but some of my assistants will. I will meet with Palestinian figures from east Jerusalem at the French consulate, especially Palestinian deputies from the city. I will reiterate to them the firm French position on the status of the city of Jerusalem. [end recording]

**Jordan: German Parliament Speaker Arrives, Makes Statement**

*JN2407061796 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[Announcer-read report over video from "The News at Ten"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Latest peace developments, Jordanian- German bilateral ties, and joint parliamentary issues will be the focus of meetings between visiting German Parliament Speaker Rita Suessmuth and Jordanian officials.

Suessmuth, who arrived in Amman this evening, is expected to meet with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan tonight. Suessmuth, who will also meet with other Jordanian officials tomorrow, told JTV reporter Muhammad al-Burini that her discussion in Amman will focus on the importance of economic progress to Middle East peace.

[Begin Suessmuth recording] First of all, Jordan was in such a way supporting the peace process in the Middle East and on the other side, it needs regional economic growth, because keeping peace and making peace you need conditions which are favorable for the region as a whole. And there is another ambition to support youth in Jordan because, on the board of the International Youth Foundation we are interested to support projects

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in Jordan and the Middle East. [end recording] [video shows Suessmuth arriving, being received by speaker of the house of representatives, and talking to a reporter]

**Jordan: Ambassador Says King Husayn To Visit Saudi Arabia 'Soon'**

*JN2407094996 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 24 Jul 96 p 1*

[Report by Sa'd al-Silawi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman—Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Sudayri, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Jordan, said that contacts are currently under way to arrange a visit by His Majesty King Husayn to Saudi Arabia soon. In an exclusive statement to AL-RA'Y, Shaykh al-Sudayri said that the Jordanian-Saudi relations are fraternal and long-standing. He noted that the work of the joint committees is continuing at all levels. He added that Jordan and Saudi Arabia encourage their private sectors to establish joint investments to serve the joint interests.

Regarding Saudi Arabia's position on the peace process, Ambassador al-Sudayri asserted that Jerusalem is the capital of the Palestinian state and that peace clearly relies on the land-for-peace principle.

**Jordan: Popular Delegation Praises al-Asad's 'Noble Positions'**

*JN2407070296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] In Amman, a popular delegation from al-Ramtha and Bani Kinanah Districts, in northern Jordan, praised the pan-Arab role Syria, under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad is playing, and emphasized that Syria is the last trench that defends the Arab nation. The delegation said it is the duty of all honorable Arabs to support Syria, which is engaged in the peace battle while adhering to the constants and legitimate rights of the Arabs.

This was conveyed by the delegation, headed by Talal 'Ubaydat, member of the Jordanian House of Representatives, which visited the Syrian Embassy in Amman and was received by Charge d'Affaires Wahib Jabr.

'Ubaydat and the delegates spoke about the pan-Arab feelings that Arabs everywhere have toward President Hafiz al-Asad and his firm and noble positions to honorably defend the just causes of the Arab nation in face of the defamation and deception.

The delegates praised the great achievements realized in Syria and emphasized that the power and esteem of Syria, led by al-Asad, is power for all Arabs in face of the conspiracy against the Arab nation, its dignity, and its future.

**Jordan: Al-Mu'ashshir on Peace Process, Bread Subsidy**

*JN2307121096 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 23 Jul 96 p 25*

[Report by Hani al-Duwayk]

[FBIS Translated Text] Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir said His Majesty King Husayn will visit Syria to meet with his brother Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad after his majesty returns home. He said no date has been set for the visit, adding that contacts are under way.

Al-Mu'ashshir said: There are two major issues on the leaders' agenda. The first and most important deals with coordination on the next stage of the peace process, based on the mutual interests of the two fraternal countries. He explained that coordination does not have to mean identical views. We think that the desire for coordination is much stronger that it was before. The second issue has to do with bilateral relations. There are problems with the brothers in Syria, mostly security-related problems. We want to resolve these problems in a clear manner and build a relationship on sound foundations. This will prevent a repeat of past incidents, especially anti-Jordan organizations based in Syria and the bombing attempts, and enable us to make a new beginning on clear and sound foundations.

In his weekly Monday press briefing with local, Arab, and foreign journalists, al-Mu'ashshir added: All we want is for these operations to stop. He pointed out that Jordan has not received any official response to the security file that was delivered to Syria.

On the date of Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's visit to Jordan, al-Mu'ashshir said: No new date has been set for the visit, but it will take place after his majesty returns home. He said there are no political reasons for postponing Netanyahu's visit, which was scheduled for 25 July. He said Jordan held very successful talks with Israel. The message delivered by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti during his recent visit to Tel Aviv stressed the need to resume the negotiations as soon as possible.

He added: We wanted Netanyahu's visit to Egypt and Jordan to be a prelude for the resumption of negotiations. Therefore, this visit must be preceded by a positive atmosphere and positive statements through which all parties assert their commitment to the Madrid frame of reference, on which we all agreed. He pointed out that, last week in Cairo, Netanyahu affirmed that Israel is committed to this frame of reference.

Al-Mu'ashshir said he believes that the Israeli prime minister will stress his state's commitment to the Madrid

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terms of reference during his upcoming visit to Jordan. This will create a suitable atmosphere to resume the negotiations. In addition, the Israeli prime minister will hold talks on Israeli-Jordanian relations.

Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir denied that the prime minister relayed any Syrian proposals to the Israeli Government during his visit to Tel Aviv. He added that the prime minister conveyed the Arab view with regard to the its commitment to the peace process, the land-for-peace principle, and the need to resume the talks on all tracks. He pointed out that Jordan was not asked to communicate any Syrian proposals to Israel, because Jordan is not a meditator between the two countries.

Commenting on the upcoming visit to Jordan by the French foreign minister, who will come here as part of a regional tour, the information minister said: We believe that France, in particular, and EU members, in general, must play an important role in the peace process, and they actually want to play such a role. Al-Mu'ashshir indicated that the EU is a staunch supporter of the peace process, in terms of the economic aid it extends. It extends a great deal of economic assistance to the region's countries, including Jordan. We hope that Jordan will sign partnership arrangements with the EU within a few weeks.

The information minister added: We would like to hear from the French foreign minister on the political role France wants to play. We encourage such a role. Likewise, we encourage a political role for the EU in the peace process. France played an important role during the recent Israeli aggression on Lebanon. It was instrumental in achieving of a solution to this aggression. Moreover, France's special relations with the region's countries will allow it to play an important role in the future.

Al-Mu'ashshir said that the issues of Jerusalem and the settlements are Palestinian-Israeli concerns. Negotiations on these two issues will be conducted between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. Jordan will not participate in these negotiations, even though it has its own attitude toward these two issues, al- Mu'ashshir maintained.

Al-Mu'ashshir said: We can support the Palestinians in their final-status talks, but we will not be a party to these talks. Al- Mu'ashshir pointed out that the adoption of hardline positions on these issues at present will in no way help the peace process. Nor will it help create propitious circumstances. That is why we want to see the views of the two sides approximated.

Al-Mu'ashshir said: Since the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, the framework of the Jordanian-Israeli relationship has been clearly delineated. This relationship is not connected with what happens on other tracks. However, we are not interested only in treaties. We are also interested in a state of peace for all peoples of the region. Otherwise, it will not be possible to speak of economic cooperation and prosperity and peace in the region. The Jordanian-Israeli treaty is one step, but it is not the end of the road. The end result should be the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace acceptable to all the peoples of the region. That is why Jordan wants all the Arab tracks to achieve agreements similar to those it has achieved. Such agreements will help create a new state in the region.

Al-Mu'ashshir said that Jordan is not the party responsible for conducting negotiations with Israel on the future of Jerusalem. However, Jordan is very interested in what is happening in the holy city. Jordan has used the Jordanian-Israeli treaty and its ties with Israel to suspend an Israeli decision to confiscate some Arab land in Jerusalem.

The information minister said Jordan accepts what the Palestinian people accept and rejects what they reject. We are not negotiating on the Palestinian-Israeli track. We only support the Palestinian brothers.

Asked about the long line that appears each day in front of the Israeli Embassy, he said: This is indeed a big problem. We are seriously discussing this with the Israeli side. It should be resolved as soon as possible, because citizens are suffering greatly.

On the issue of Jordanian prisoners in Syrian jails, al-Mu'ashshir said: This is an old and thorny issue. The government has been working to resolve it for a long time.

At the outset of the briefing, the information minister spoke about the increase bread prices. He said the government's decision to raise bread prices is a national decision aimed at correcting the economic imbalance and strengthening Jordan's position in anticipation of any future developments. He pointed out that the prime minister has said on several occasions that he is willing to talk to all official and popular quarters about this decision. Al- Mu'ashshir added that the decision is not meant to lift the bread subsidy, but to raise bread prices while maintaining subsidy in full. This means that Jordanian citizens will not be affected by this decision.

Al-Mu'ashshir expressed the government's thanks for the quarters that supported the government's position by announcing that they would pay their employees. The government appreciates this responsible national participation.

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Al-Mu'ashshir spoke about the reasons why the government made this decision, primarily the fact that bread prices dropped to the point where a loaf of bread was cheaper than wheat. Added to this are the issues of smuggling, using bread as fodder, and the significant increase of wheat prices worldwide.

On the draft law of the Jordanian Journalists Association [JPA], al-Mu'ashshir said: The government and the JPA have narrowed their differences from 15 points to six points. These points will be debated by the cabinet, and then we will go with the JPA to the House of Representatives.

Commenting on a statement issued by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] a few days ago that some of its members in Jordan have been arrested, al-Mu'ashshir said: We do not carry out political arrests. All the arrests that take place in Jordan have a security background.

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**Lebanon: De Charette, Buwayz Make Statements on Israeli Withdrawal**

*NC2307121496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Concluding his visit to the Bustrus Palace [the Foreign Ministry], French Foreign Minister de Charette held a joint news conference with Foreign Minister Buwayz in which he announced that his country stands alongside Lebanon and is taking action to push forward the peace process, which is currently in limbo. He said: Any delay in proceeding with the peace process will have negative repercussions. He clarified that he and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad discussed south Lebanon and he sensed that Syria is enthusiastic about resuming the peace process. He did not wish to comment on the possibility of an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon, warning against too much talk about this subject. He said his country will play an active role in the peace process and will not sit back and just watch what is happening. He welcomed the agreement between Lebanon and Israel on the body-swap. He named the head of the French group in the monitoring committee stemming from the April Understanding as (Jean-Michel Gossau), who will be based in Lebanon and Cyprus. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Buwayz] The French minister's visit to the region coincides with political developments, particularly following the election of Netanyahu in Israel and the stumbling and freezing of the peace process. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Two days ago you said in a news conference that you do not expect a second withdrawal by Israel [words indistinct].

[Buwayz] I was asked about what is being discussed regarding the expected or possible withdrawal from the south. I answered that, unfortunately, I do not expect a full withdrawal, which, for us, would be similar to the implementation of Resolution 425. If this withdrawal does take place, it would be a positive event and would allow the Lebanese State to impose its authority and deploy its army fully in the region. But I believe that such talk—in the corridors of international politics—touches on tactical or practical withdrawal on the ground, because the Israeli army cannot protect itself in every position in this region. My view on these withdrawals is that they are not positive, because they do not take place throughout Lebanese territory. If they do take place they will take place in pockets, which would not allow us to extend the authority of the State as we should. Thank you. [end recording]

**Lebanon: Fadlallah Comments on Israeli Envoy Remarks on Golan**

*NC2307185096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[Interview with Lebanese Shiite spiritual leader Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given— live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] Your Eminence Ayatollah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah, the Israeli ambassador in the United States, said Syria sought the destruction of Israel and lost part of its land that was annexed to the Israeli entity. We see no reason to give up the Golan, he said. What is your comment on this statement?

[Fadlallah] We think Israel is trying, through all of its government officials and diplomats, to brainwash world public opinion about self-evident controversial political issues. Naturally this new ambassador is seeking to justify to his superior the negative statements he made in Washington. They were regarded as far removed from political flexibility, as they say. He wants to impart to the Zionists' refusal to give back the Golan a meaning linked to a legal status on the grounds that it is a land occupied by the Zionists in war. This adds legitimacy to this occupation, enabling them to hold on to the land under the theme of security or any other name.

We believe the Zionists are always seeking to bring up numerous issues and suggestions through various statements to confuse the world's political and media outlook. We think their occupation of all of Palestine and part of Syrian and Lebanese territories represents illegitimacy in every sense of the word because they captured a land that does not belong to them. They displaced an entire nation from its land and captured a land belonging to another country. Therefore, they represent illegitimacy. But our problem with this world is that it does not respect right and nations' rights to their land, independence, and freedom but respects international games and might.

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**Syria: Al-Shar', Ross Discuss 'Future' of Peace Process**

*JN2307205596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' held talks with Dennis Ross, U.S. general coordinator of the Middle East peace process, in Latakia this evening. The talks were attended by Walid al-Mu'allim, Syrian ambassador in Washington; Dr. Mikha'il Wahbah, director of the Special Bureaus Department at the Foreign Ministry; Mark Parris, the U.S. President's adviser for the Middle East Affairs; and Christopher Ross, the U.S. ambassador in Damascus. Discussions dealt with the future of the peace process in light of regional developments.

**Syria: Press on 'Intensive' Diplomatic Moves, Netanyahu's Policies**

*JN2407083896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 24 Jul 96*

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a commentary titled "The Firmness of the International Stand Stems From the Firmness of the Arab Position," the newspaper TISHRIN notes that, during his meeting with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, President al-Asad welcomed an active French and European role to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on the resolutions of international legitimacy.

TISHRIN says: The Arab countries and the international community agree on the need to observe the Madrid foundations, the Security Council resolutions, and the land-for-peace principle as the way to achieve the aspired comprehensive settlement. Only Israel violates this Arab and international consensus. Israel's rulers seek to stab the peace process, squander all the international efforts, and return the region to an atmosphere of war and explosion.

In Washington, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu did not hesitate to announce his intention to maintain and not to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories. He proposed peace with security in response to the land-for-peace principle. Peace-with-security means that the Arabs will simultaneously relinquish their occupied lands to Israel and provide peace to it. Netanyahu's statements drew strong protests from around the world. They prompted the Arabs to reconsider their positions and remain alert to the Zionist schemes. Netanyahu sought to contain these protests by making baseless claims about peace. He called for resuming the peace talks, without adhering to the foundations of the international efforts to convince the Arab parties to enter these talks. After reviewing Netanyahu's positions, the simplest of observers will become convinced that Netanyahu's government has completely turned its back to the peace process.

TISHRIN concludes: The Arab stand should be consolidated. The Cairo summit results should be promoted. Arab action should be boosted. Capabilities and energies should be pooled. Bargaining over Arab rights should be avoided. Channels should be opened with the international community, and constructive cooperation should be activated with all the international parties concerned with accomplishing a just and comprehensive peace in the region. Europe, and particularly France, should be encouraged to play an active and effective role. All of these steps will beleaguer the aggressive Israeli position and prompt the United States to fulfill its commitments.

In a commentary headlined "The Objective of the Intensive Moves," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: The active diplomatic efforts in the region reflect Arab and international concern over the extremist policy pursued by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. This policy returned the peace process to square one and ushered in a new stage of escalation that forebodes great dangers.

The newspaper adds: The United States itself — which, at the beginning, called for waiting and giving Netanyahu a chance and not passing hasty judgment on his campaign pronouncements — showed some tacit concern after Netanyahu's visit. This worry was not revealed because of political blackmail by Netanyahu. He is aware that he has enough time before the U.S. presidential elections to use the Zionist lobby to bridle any moves by the White House to pressure Israel.

AL-THAWRAH says: It is a foregone conclusion that Netanyahu is dealing with the entire world as if he is its emperor and with all his detestable arrogance and haughtiness. Instead of changing his political discourse or intransigent positions, he believes that the United States and the Arabs should adapt themselves to his stands and become familiar with his approach to peace — which he believes is nothing more than an opportunity to impose his hegemony on the Arabs and their destinies.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: The peace process is on the verge of an extremely serious stage that heralds the collapse of the peace opportunity, which will have catastrophic consequences to the region and the world. Therefore, the only way to make this peace is the full Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories.

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Washington should urge Tel Aviv to understand this fact.

In a commentary titled "The Arabs and the New Stand," the newspaper AL-BA'TH says: The Cairo summit was jump in the right direction. The world has started to feel that the Arabs have adopted a new stand that boosts their rights and ensures their capability to support these rights. AL-BA'TH says: The shocks caused by the adamant Israeli positions stunned the optimists. The Israeli officials' statements caused the forces concerned about the Middle East to fear that Israel might have had plans to undermine peace and the hopes for achieving a secure and stable peace in the Middle East.

AL-BA'TH adds: The world has determined its position toward the Israeli arrogance by intensifying its contacts, efforts, and consultations. The Arabs should only support this world effort — not by warning of the repercussions of Israeli arrogance, but by abiding by the Madrid principles and holding fast to the Security Council resolutions and the UN recommendations.

AL-BA'TH concludes: The gloomy picture of the region's future will not change as long as Israel can defy the international resolutions, relying on the assistance of the big countries to it. Given that Arab rights have been usurped for 50 years, nobody, other than the Arabs themselves, will be able to champion and achieve this right.

**Syria: Radio Calls for Keeping Arab, World Pressure on Israel**

*JN2307145696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: In his meeting with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, President Hafiz al-Asad welcomed an active and effective French and European role that assists in ending the stalemate facing the Middle East process, which was caused by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu through his extremist positions and disavowal of the bases and principles of the Madrid conference.

France, through President Jacques Chirac and the Florence European summit, urged Israel to abide fully by the bases of the peace process, especially the land-for-peace principle.

From the first contacts on convening the Madrid conference, Syria called for a European role in the peace process in view of the many historical links between the Mediterranean states and the direct European interest in establishing just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. The Syrian efforts faced strong Israeli opposition, and Europe did not show enough political will to play the role it might be given in view of its geographic location and its many interests in the region.

With the return of the Gaullist movement to power in France and President Jacques Chirac's announcement of his determination that France will have a role in the Mediterranean and the Arab world, Syria and President Hafiz al-Asad repeatedly welcomed this trend and showed readiness for very strong relations with France and Europe. It is important for the international community to continue pressure in order to implement its resolutions to reach a just and solid peace in the Middle East. The United States, which declared its commitment to the peace process and its principles and objectives, did not employ the expected pressure on Israel. Israel continued to procrastinate and circumvent the Security Council resolutions until the extremist government of Netanyahu came to power. Most ministers of that government call for war, expansion, and the expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland. This government openly declared opposition to withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, the West Bank, and Jerusalem. It announced plans to intensify construction of settlements and increase the number of settlers in the West Bank to a half million Jews. This will lead to the collapse of the peace process and an increase in tension in the region.

Europe, at the initiative of France, emphasized the importance of the peace process and the need to abide by the declared bases and warned against relinquishing this process. This position was manifested in Florence summit and received international support. The seven richest countries in the world, in addition to Russia, affirmed the same position. International public opinion was crystallized strongly opposing the ideas of Netanyahu's government. This opposition has grown since the Arab summit in Cairo and the unified position adopted by the Arabs, which emphasized their commitment to the peace process in accordance with its approved bases on the one hand, and held Israel responsible for any future setback on the other. The summit warned of reconsidering all steps made toward Israel, especially normalization of relations.

Hence, the Arabs and the international community agreed that the peace process should continue and that its principles, especially the land-for-peace principle, should be accurately respected.

The Syrian-French talks in Latakia showed agreement in positions and views because Middle East peace has become an urgent international need, just as it is necessary for the countries of the region. In face of the unified Arab position and the strong opposition of

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the international community, Netanyahu's government eased the statements of its officials, but in fact its ambitions and expansionist schemes were not changed. Peace comes through action first, and peace begins by a pledge to implement the Security Council resolutions, which do not allow the occupation of others' lands by force and ask Israel to withdraw fully to the lines of 4 June 1967. All the Arabs, as well as the international community, are aware that there will be no dealing with Netanyahu's government without the latter canceling its settlement plans and openly committing itself to return the occupied Arab territories and respect the rights of the Palestinian people.

The only result of easing the Arab and international pressure will be to encourage the Israeli rulers to continue with their stubbornness and extremism and to push the region to the verge of explosion.

**Syria: Daimler-Benz Offers To Develop Syrian Aviation, Railroads**

*JN2307115396 Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 11 Jul 96 p 1*

[FBIS Translated Text] London (SANA) — A delegation representing the German group Daimler-Benz concluded a visit to Damascus on 9 July. The delegation, which was led by Manfred Ginz, a member of the group's board of directors, met with several senior Syrian officials in the fields of economy, industry, information, and banks.

In a statement to the [London-based] paper AL-HAYAH published yesterday, Ginz said that he made an offer to Syrian officials to participate in developing the Syrian aviation fleet and its railroads.

Ginz praised the economic development achieved by Syria, especially in the current phase, saying: The achievement of just comprehensive peace in the region will lead to real economic prosperity. It will be a strong incentive for investment in the region, especially Syria, which is witnessing qualitative development in the economic fields.

Ginz described Syrian-German relations as good and said that they are developing continuously. He indicated that he made an offer to Syrian officials to participate in developing the aviation fleet and the railroads in Syria.

Ginz left Syria two days ago after a visit of several days.

**Syria: Defense Minister Talas Addresses Troops in Lebanon 23 Jul**

*JN2407095696 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] Pursuant to instructions from President Hafiz al-Asad, commander-in-chief of the Army and the Armed Forces, General Mustafa Talas, deputy commander-in-chief, deputy prime minister, and defense minister, visited one of our combat formations in Lebanon today. He was accompanied by Assistant Chief of Staff Lieutenant General 'Ali Aslan and a number of the command staff members.

Upon their arrival at the formation command, the general and his delegation were received by the formation commander, a number of officers, and a large number of fighters.

The general delivered a speech, at the outset of which he said: I am pleased to meet with you as we approach the 51st anniversary of the heroic Syrian Arab Army. I am also pleased to convey greetings from struggler leader President Hafiz al-Asad and his wishes for success to the brother fighters in Lebanon in performing their pan-Arab tasks. These tasks reinforce the Syrian Arab Army's pan-Arab and ideological role in bolstering Lebanon's unity—land, people, and Arabism—and in promoting the ties of brotherhood between the two fraternal countries, Syria and Lebanon.

The general then spoke about the status of the peace process, Israel's intransigent and maneuvering stands, and its evasion of the requirements of a just and comprehensive peace — whether by the previous Labor government or the current Likud government.

He said: Since the Madrid Conference, the Israeli leadership has failed to overcome its illusions and achieve the aspired peace. On the contrary, it has always resorted to military escalation. The world saw some of this escalation during the Grapes of Wrath campaign, through which Israel tried to destroy the Lebanese infrastructure.

The general briefed the brother fighters on Syria's national and pan-Arab role under President al-Asad's historic leadership, saying: Syria has become a center of international and Arab attention. Al- Asad's Syria now has the final say. It is also capable of foiling all conspiracies and aggressions against Arab rights.

The general noted: The Arab summit's statement was a translation of the Damascus tripartite summit's statement, which stresses the importance of Arab solidarity at this stage and leader al-Asad's role in it.

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The general added: In the age of changing developments, the firm stands and national and pan-Arab demands of al-Asad's Syria constitute a strong guarantee for achieving our legitimate rights. We support rights and call for achieving them. We do not support falsehoods. We are not concerned about the Israeli concept of peace, because it conflicts with our principles and constants. All sides should realize that our Armed Forces, which waged the October war of liberation under al-Asad's historic leadership, are capable of other Octobers.

The general concluded his speech by urging the brother fighters to be alert and vigilant and to continuously maintain a state of high combat preparedness to embody the values of the Syrian Arab Army, which has become, thanks to its stands, the Arab nation's army.

The general and his delegation then left the formation command. They were bade a warm farewell.

**Syria: Ba'th Party Officials on Efforts To Resume Peace Process**

*JN2407111496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, and Dr. 'Abd-al-Razzaq Ayyub, member of the Ba'th Party regional command and president of the Regional Education Bureau and the Regional Vanguards Bureau, met this evening with students at the Astronaut Munir Habib Camp for university military training in Dayr al-Zawr. [passage omitted]

At the outset of the meeting, the Ba'th Party's assistant secretary general conveyed greetings from comrade struggler Hafiz al-Asad, the Ba'th Party's secretary general and president of the Republic, wishing them more success and progress. [passage omitted]

Al-Ahmar also noted the recent achievements and changes during the past stage as part of the comprehensive development process. This has made Syria a fortress of Arab steadfastness and a cohesive mass through its national unity, which is reinforced and enriched under the leadership of struggler President Hafiz al-Asad and the guidance of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party's resolutions and directives.

The assistant secretary general spoke about regional and world developments, especially in the peace process. He talked about the prestige of Syria, which is playing a basic role in all the region's affairs. He said that Syria sought to activate its role at the Arab and international levels to maintain Arab dignity and defend Arab rights. He noted its ongoing efforts to overcome Arab weakness and division and close Arab ranks in order to achieve Arab solidarity that forms the basis for the Arabs to restore their rights and occupied territories, provides a suitable atmosphere to build their future and unity, and enables them to interact with the world on the basis of equitable and just relations.

Comrade al-Ahmar reviewed Arab and international efforts, moves, and contacts to advance the peace process based on the principles that call for implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy, especially UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, and the land-for-peace principle. He asserted Syria's adherence to the peace option and its firm stand, which it expressed before the entire world, to achieve a just and comprehensive peace, in accordance with Madrid principles. He noted that this peace is the Arabs' strategic option, as embodied by the Cairo summit, and is an international demand reflected by current and future efforts to advance the peace process, which has frozen because of Israel's intransigence and failure to commit itself to the peace requirements, especially its new government, which is threatening to torpedo this process.

Comrade al-Ahmar said that Syria welcomes all efforts and initiatives to advance the peace process — especially French and European efforts. These efforts confirm France's and Europe's interest and support anyone seeking to achieve peace in the region. He noted that Syria hopes that the United States and Russia, the cosponsors of the peace process, will activate their role and exercise their influence to push Israel on the path of peace and achieve its requirements, especially the points that do not allow Israel to occupy the territories of others by force and secure its full withdrawal from the Golan to the 4 June 1967 lines and from southern Lebanon, the western al-Biqa', and other occupied Arab territories.

Comrade al-Ahmar expressed his confidence and optimism in the Arab nation's ability and solidarity to overcome the weakness and fragmentation it has been suffering from and to mobilize resources to reinforce joint Arab action and activate the Arab role and international efforts to support Syria's steadfastness. This will help Syria confront the challenges and campaigns launched against it and support its struggle to achieve a just and comprehensive peace that restores land and rights to their Arab owners and provides the region with security, stability, and prosperity.

At the end of the meeting, comrades al-Ahmar and Ayyub thanked the camp leaders and trainers for their efforts and wished the students success in their studies and training and in arming themselves with the pan-Arab ideology of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and

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their adherence to the noble values of the nation's leader, comrade struggler Hafiz al-Asad.

The students in the camp presented a pledge written in blood, expressing their allegiance and loyalty to President Hafiz al-Asad.

**Syria: Water Resource Management Efforts Reported**

*JN2407081596 Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 7 Jul 96 p 8*

[Report by Fahd Diyab]

[FBIS Translated Text] The actual storage capacities of Syrian dams — small-, medium-, and large-size — amount to about 16 billion cubic meters of water. The 143 dams are located in seven basins, including 15 in the Coastal Basin, 11 in the Tigris and Khabur Basin, 39 in the Yarmuk Basin, 37 in the Orontes Basin, two in the Euphrates Basin, 33 in the al-Badiyah [Desert] Basin, and six in Barada and al-A'awaj Basin.

There are also ambitious plans to build more dams in all the water basins in order to increase the water available for land reclamation projects, expand cultivated areas, and conserve water. Work is under way to build 14 new dams, including four in the Coastal Basin, two in the Euphrates Basin, one in al—Khabur Basin, two in al-Yarmuk Basin, and five in the Orontes Basin. Seven dams are scheduled to be completed this year, chief among which is al-Khabur Dam in al-Hasakah Governorate, started in 1992. The dam with an eventual storage capacity of 665 million cubic meters, will cost of about 2 billion Syrian pounds, and will eventually irrigate 150,000 hectares of lands, generate electricity, and ensure drinking water for inhabitants.

The Tishrin Dam is being built on the Euphrates River in Aleppo Governorate and is due to be completed during the second half of 1997. It will have a storage capacity of 1.9 billion cubic meters. The dam, which is being built at a cost of 4.251 billion pounds, will generate 630 megawatts of electricity power.

Irrigation projects in Syria enjoy special government attention. The allocations for these projects in the annual state budget have continued to increase, reaching 13.9 billion Syrian pounds in the 1996 budget. Allocations for irrigation projects totaled 150-million pounds in 1970, 700-million pounds in 1980, and 5-billion pounds in 1990.

Syria has a mediterranean climate. Summers are hot, and winters are moderately cold and rainy. Agricultural land is divided into five rainfall areas: land with more than 350mm of rainfall per year; land with 250-350mm of rainfall per year; land with an average rainfall of 250mm per year; land with 200-250mm per year; and al-Badiyah [desert] and the remaining land, which represent 60 percent of Syria's total area of 185,000 square kilometers.

In harmony with prevailing agricultural and environmental conditions, the government considers irrigation projects and water resource management its top priorities. Dam projects and irrigation canals have been built to bring the total area of irrigated land to about 1.2 million hectares. Of this, about 350,000 hectares are irrigated by government networks; 720,000 hectares are irrigated by the country's 145,000 wells; and, 130,000 hectares are irrigated by rivers and springs.

Studies have assessed the water reserves of all basins. These studies show that reserves do not total more than 10 billion cubic meters, without counting Syria's share of water from the Euphrates River, which amounts to 31.4 billion cubic meters at the Syrian-Turkish border. Efforts to share the water with Turkey according to international pacts and norms and to guarantee Syria's historical rights to this water are continuing. This also applies to the Tigris River, where Syria's share of the water at the Syrian-Turkish border is about 18.3 billion cubic meters.

Syria's water consumption has increased tangentially. In 1970, it was 4.8 billion cubic meters. It then increased up to 5.85 billion cubic meters in 1980, 7.725 billion cubic meters in 1990, and 13.620 billion cubic meters in 1995.

The Irrigation Ministry, set up under Law No. 16 of 1982, conducts studies on water resources in Syria. The ministry tracks water resources, development, protection, and pollution prevention. It determines how the water resources are used, and studies and designs irrigation and drainage projects, including installations and dams. It operates irrigation and drainage networks and pumping stations, and maintains installations and networks.

The prime minister follows the implementation of all irrigation projects through periodic meetings of the Higher Council for State Construction Companies, which discusses projects and schedules, and tracks their implementation, in order to ensure they meet all the requirements. The council also makes the necessary decisions in order to keep projects on track. The council has higher committees that follow the implementation of major projects, such as the Tishrin Dam project and the al-Khabur irrigation project. The council has broad powers to make the necessary decisions to ensure immediate supplies and find solutions to problems.

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In 1995, the State Organization for Land Reclamation completed the drainage system for the first phase of Maskanah Gharb project, which involved the reclamation of 8,687 hectares of land. It also reclaimed 1,560 hectares of lands in the second phase of the Maskanah Gharb project and 1,694 hectares in the Maskanah Sharq project. The organization also improved the drainage system of 300 hectares of land in the pioneering Wadi al-Ghaydani project. Moreover, the organization completed the fifth and sixth branch canals of Sector 7 of the Lower Euphrates project, which covers 2,183 hectares. It implemented a project to dredge and clear a small tributary of the Euphrates River that flows through Dayr al-Zawr. The organization also completed the Basil al-Asad pipe factory, which began operating in November 1995.

Having completed marshlands reclaimation in Sectors 3, 5, and 7 on the right bank of the Euphrates River, the organization will soon begin the Balikh project irrigating 2,500 hectares of lands in Sector 2, as soon as the lower main canal is completed.

This year, the General Organization for Land Reclamation is expected to reclaim 5,557 hectares in the second phase of the Maskanah Gharb project; 5,122 hectares in the Maskanah Sharq project; 6,100 hectares in Sector 2 of the Balikh project under contract with the Military Housing Establishment; and 5,400 hectares in Sector 2 of the Balikh project under contract with the Rima Company. It also drained marshlands on the left bank of the Euphrates River.

**Syria: Significance of 1996 World Food Summit Discussed**

*JN2407120096 Damascus AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 9 Jul 96 p 8*

[From the "People's Talk" column by Bassam Ja'arah: "World Food Summit Conference"]

[FBIS Translated Text] We do not believe that there will be a more significant event in 1996 than the World Food Summit Conference, which is scheduled for 13 November in Rome. Achieving food security for all is a most sublime aim. We hardly need remind everyone that the issue does not just concern the fate of the 800 million people in developing countries who face food scarcities or the 200 million children below the age of five who are suffering from protein and energy deficiencies. The figures we have just mentioned are expected to double for most poor states. Food security for most of people in these states has become a real problem that is getting worse each day, causing more suffering and danger that threatens all mankind.

The World Food Summit Conference is being held because this problem cannot be solved by simply asking rich states to provide more aid to poor states that face a scarcity of food. The problem will be solved by formulating new policies that will enable these states to become self-sufficient in food production. Action plans that will embody these policies, ensure their requirements are met, and determine the contribution of each state, economic community, or bloc must be formulated.

We are not absolving the poor states of their share of the responsibility for aggravating the food problem when we say that the policies pursued by the rich states on the question of food production have greatly contributed to the creation and aggravation of this problem. It is a fact that until recently, rich states that produce food have been encouraging the poor states to import food instead of producing it domestically. The problem took a serious turn when grain prices increased. The rich states have encouraged an import policy, while the UN Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] has been doing the opposite. FAO has encouraged the poor states to secure their food needs through self-sufficiency. True, FAO's efforts have produced some results, but these efforts could have been more effective, comprehensive, and positive if the policies of the rich states had been harmonious with those of the FAO.

The important thing now is to make a new beginning in the right direction. We believe that the FAO is fully qualified to submit a suitable working paper on the correct and sound handling of the problem of food scarcity in the poor states.

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## Afghanistan

### Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Chairs Cabinet Session, Discusses Pakistan, Finances

*LD2207192396 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 22 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] A session of the cabinet was held under the chairmanship of Brother [Golboddin] Hekmatyar, the prime minister of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, this morning. The prime minister's press office reported to BAKHTAR that first the esteemed prime minister spoke about the situation in the country. The cabinet instructed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take into consideration the details of the reopening of Pakistan's Embassy in Kabul. The cabinet session heard a report by the finance minister about the import of food and fuel from foreign countries and about preventing a fall in the value of the Afghan currency. The cabinet resolved that the ministers of finance and internal affairs should visit Pakistan in connection with the import of food and fuel and finding a market for the export of fresh fruit. The cabinet decided that the imported goods [food and fuel] should be supplied at the purchase price plus costs by the emergency and welfare administration.

To prevent inflation, the cabinet resolved that the government should check a further rise in the prices of primary staple goods and the fall in the value of the Afghan currency against foreign currencies through recovering past years' government credits, cutting expenditure in ministries and administrations, and preventing the circulation of counterfeit money in the market.

The previously appointed commission was assigned to study the merger of state administrations and the debts of government corporations and to present its report to the next cabinet session, which will present the outcome of their study to the president's office for approval. [words indistinct]

### Afghanistan: Ahmad Mas'ud Expresses Support for Hekmatyar's Reforms

*LD2207180096 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 22 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, a member of the High State Council, has said that he is not opposed to the reforms carried out by (Brother Hekmatyar).

Engineer Ahmad Shah Mas'ud met a delegation of the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party], headed by Haji Mohammad Farid, in Jabalosaraj the other day. A Radio Message of Freedom correspondent reported to us that during the meeting esteemed Ahmad Shah Mas'ud said he was not against the reforms that have been announced by the country's prime minister in Kabul. The irresponsible remarks made by some people had nothing to do with him. They were their own views that were not important nor did they deserve attention. Esteemed Ahmad Shah Mas'ud described Brother Hekmatyar's arrival in Kabul as progress in the peace process in the country. He said that they (?wanted) to coexist peacefully with brothers from the Hezb-e Eslami.

Engineer Ahmad Shah Mas'ud said that soon he wanted to have a long meeting with brother Hekmatyar, the prime minister, to reassure him that he will stand by the president and prime minister with all his power. He said: I know that some elements and circles are unhappy about the recent changes [words indistinct] because they feel that their interests are under threat. Notwithstanding, we have resolved to make the experience of unity fruitful and will not allow anyone to create obstacles and problems.

About a probable Taleban attack on Kabul, esteemed Ahmad Shah Mas'ud said: If the Taleban make the mistake of attacking Kabul, they will be taught a good lesson. We also want the Taleban to stop firing rockets into Kabul. They should not test our patience any further. Otherwise we are duty-bound to defend the people of Kabul.

### Afghanistan: Taleban Leader Attacked Near Herat

*LD2307140596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] According to reports, the car of Mullah Mohammad Omar, the leader of the Taleban group, and his bodyguard convoy have been attacked near the Afghan city of Herat. He was not injured in the incident.

DARIZ, a Kabul newspaper, reporting the incident in its 22 July issue, added that Mullah Omar was planning to go to the city of Herat in northwest Afghanistan. However, he was forced to turn back after the attack.

It is said that Mullah Mohammad Omar was also attacked earlier, in Ghazni Province, where a number of Taleban leaders were killed.

The report has not been confirmed by independent sources yet.

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**Afghanistan: Taleban Militia Shell Kabul Despite Declaring Cease-Fire**

*LD2307141196 Tehran IRNA in English 1100 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, July 23, IRNA — The Taleban militia shelled the residential areas of Kabul just 24 hours after it had declared its commitment to observe a nation-wide cease-fire while an inoculation program is being carried out for the Afghan children and mothers. The Security Commission of the Afghan capital said on Monday [22 July] that the Taleban militia, violating the cease-fire, fired more than five rockets and Katyusha shells on western Kabul killing a two-year-old boy and injuring two civilans. Three houses were also destroyed in the latest attack, added the source.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations' Children's Fund (UNICEF) on Sunday [21 July] called on all warring factions in the war-torn Afghanistan to silence their guns during the implementation of a vaccination program between July 21 and 25. Most of the factions and warring sides in Afghanistan had accepted the call.

**Afghanistan: Taleban Embarks on New Move To Stabilize Afghan Economy**

*BK1907121196 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 19 Jul 96 p 12*

[Report by Rahimullah Yusufzal]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Peshawar — The Taleban have embarked on a massive exercise of seeking the advice of Afghan businessmen spread all over the world for stabilising Afghanistan's currency and economy.

Maulvi Amir Khan Mutaqqi, head of information in the Taleban Islamic movement in Kandahar, told THE NEWS there was no truth in reports that they were about to float their own currency. "We have no intention of doing such a thing as it could add to the sufferings of the Afghan people and destroy whatever is left of Afghanistan's economy. We would continue to treat the Afghani as legal tender in Taleban-controlled areas," he explained.

Mutaqqi felt their ongoing campaign to try and rejuvenate the Afghan economy may have been misconstrued as an attempt to launch new bank notes of Afghani. "What we are doing is a sincere effort to stabilise the Afghani and revive and streamline the Afghan economy," he stressed.

He informed that Taleban had established contacts with Afghan businessmen and traders in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Gulf states, Europe and the U.S. to seek their views on affecting improvements in the war-shattered Afghan economy. He said many of them had already responded to the Taleban initiative by faxing their opinions to Kandahar.

In reply to a question, Mutaqqi conceded that one of their pilots had defected to the Kabul regime. "We never suspected the pilot, Abdul Jalil. On that fateful day, he flew his MIG-17 jet-fighter from Kandahar airport for a test flight following some repairs to the aircraft. Little did we know that the he would head straight for Kabul and later land his plane at Bagram airbase," he narrated.

Mutaqqi said the Taleban were saddened by the defection of their pilot. However, he said the Taleban could do little except keeping a closer watch on their pilots and others handling sensitive weapons. He denied the Taleban had set up a commission to probe the pilot's defection or lax security at Kandahar airport. "There was no security lapse. There was little that the Taleban could do once the pilot made up his mind to defect," he argued.

## Bangladesh

**Bangladesh: Shahabuddin Ahmed Elected President Uncontested**

*BK2307151596 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1500 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Former Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed has been elected president uncontested. This was announced by the Election Commission through a gazette notification in Dhaka today. It said that Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed was the only candidate and his nomination paper was found valid after it was scrutinized today. Chief Justice Shahabuddin was the acting president of the first caretaker government in 1991.

## India

**India: Gujral Comments on 'Firm Opposition' to CTBT**

*BK2307071996 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 23 Jul 96 p 5*

[Report by Dinesh C. Sharma on an interview with Indian External Affairs Minister Inder Kumar Gujral in New Delhi on 19 July]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has decided to convey its firm opposition to signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Jakarta where it was formally admitted as a full dialogue partner on Saturday [27 July].

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"We don't feel there is any need to be defensive on this issue and we are not going to change our view," senior officials of the external affairs ministry told reporters.

India's Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral is also planning to convey New Delhi's position on the CTBT to the United States during a scheduled meeting in Jakarta with US Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

In an interview with BANGKOK POST on July 19, shortly before leaving New Delhi for Jakarta, Mr. Gujral emphasised that India had never accepted the notion of allowing some countries to rely on nuclear weapons for their security, while others are denied this right.

Mr. Gujral said India would support ASEAN's effort to create a nuclear-free zone in Southeast Asia "provided it enjoys consensus among all states of the region".

The creation of such zones, he added "must be on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the states of the region concerned".

The following are excerpts from the interview with Mr. Gujral:

Question: Being a full dialogue partner of ASEAN allows closer cooperation in economic and security matters. What will be your emphasis?

Gujral: We are extremely pleased to have become a full dialogue partner. This is indicative of the success of our "Look East" policy. It also testifies to the success of interactions with ASEAN as a sectoral dialogue partner in areas of trade, investment, science and technology, and tourism.

As a full dialogue partner, we would look to further deepen and diversify these relations. In addition, we will seek to identify new areas of special strengths and comparative advantage. I can immediately think of areas like human resources development and infrastructure as new fields of cooperation, cross-referenced to the existing four sectors.

[BANGKOK POST] Is India looking for a bigger market in ASEAN or more investments from ASEAN countries?

[Gujral] India today signifies a large market and so does ASEAN. There are vast opportunities to augment Indo-ASEAN trade flows. Similarly there is tremendous scope for mutual investments and setting up joint ventures in infrastructure areas like roads and highways, ports and airports, power and telecom.

[BANGKOK POST] China too is becoming a full dialogue partner of ASEAN. How does India plan to resist the potential for Sino-Indian rivalry in ASEAN?

[Gujral] The decision regarding China's upgrade is a matter between China and ASEAN. India has good relations with all full dialogue partners of ASEAN including China, though we may have some pending issues to be settled through bilateral dialogue with China. In this context, I must reiterate that it has been our consistent and declared policy not to raise bilateral and contentious issues in international or multilateral forums.

[BANGKOK POST] What if ASEAN admits Pakistan as a full dialogue partner?

[Gujral] This is a matter for ASEAN to decide.

[BANGKOK POST] Having obtained full dialogue status with ASEAN, will India now push for membership of APEC and participation in ASEM (the Asia-Europe Meeting) the latter possibly through your links with Britain, the forum's next host?

[Gujral] India is interested in membership of APEC, and pending a moratorium on new membership in the organisation, we are proposing to participate in select working groups of APEC of interest to us.

It is understood that the proposal is under consideration by APEC and we are hopeful that India will be invited to participate after the internal processes and consultation within APEC are complete .

Similarly, given India's size, its geostrategic location and the weight of its economy, we are convinced that any forum claiming to represent Asia cannot be complete without India. We are, therefore, hopeful that in view of the objective relations, India will be invited to participate in ASEM. I am confident that in view of our excellent relations with all ASEAN countries and other Asian members of ASEM, as well as all the EU members, including the UK, the host of the next ASEM summit, India would be invited to participate in ASEM.

[BANGKOK POST] Is India's reputation as a country on the nuclear threshold and position on nuclear non-proliferation, including the CTBT, conducive to smooth relations with ASEAN? Do you support ASEAN's bid to set up a nuclear free zone in Southeast Asia. Would you advocate the same for the Indian Ocean region? If not, why not?

[Gujral] India has followed a consistent and principled nuclear policy. We have never accepted the notion that it is legitimate for some countries to rely on nuclear weapons for their security, while denying this right to others. We have been strong supporters of the cause of global nuclear non-proliferation which we believe is best achieved through universal nuclear disarmament.

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The creation of nuclear weapons free zones must be on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the states of the region concerned. Therefore India would support the ASEAN nuclear free zone provided it enjoys consensus among all states of the region.

The suggestion with regard to the Indian Ocean would not appear practical in the context of regional specificity.

[BANGKOK POST] What do you plan to raise at the ASEAN Regional Forum [ARF]? Do you think the ARF should tackle flashpoint issues or remain as a consultative forum for confidence building?

[Gujral] As a member of the ARF India looks forward to cooperating with other ARF members in creating a stable regional environment in which mutual security can be enhanced through confidence building. As democratic societies, we share a common interest in promoting the culture of tolerance and consensus which can strengthen and safeguard the plural character of our societies.

**India: Article on Benefits of 'Look East' Policy, Joining ARF**

*BK2307152696 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 23 Jul 96 p 10*

[Article by C. Uday Bhaskar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The third annual meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) — the South East Asian forum for security deliberations — that begins in Jakarta on Tuesday [23 July] and India's participation in it is a significant development in more ways than one. For India it is a historic first in that New Delhi would be participating in multilateral security deliberations outside the UN aegis for the first time. For the 21 member ARF (seven ASEAN states; three potential members — Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar [Burma]; eleven dialogue partners/observers, including the US, European Union, Japan, Australia, South Korea, India, and Russia, and China) the Jakarta meeting is an acknowledgment of the complex interdependency between the geopolitics and geo-economics linking SE Asia with regional and global networks.

**Long-Term Security**

While the economic dynamism of the vibrant Asia-Pacific region needs little reiteration, the emergence of the ARF in July 1994 was a reflection of the need to ensure that this wave of prosperity and burgeoning trade was underpinned by an ambience of long-term security and peace. Post-Cold War regional anxieties are focused around the unpredictable responses of the two Communist regimes — China and North Korea. These include the simmering Korean imbroglio with nuclear overtones, the unresolved Spratly islands issue marked by Beijing's muscle-flexing and the intractable Taiwan issue, where Chinese belligerence was recently evidenced in the PLA Navy's missile diplomacy, much to ASEAN's discomfiture.

The current ARF meeting is being held against a backdrop of significant alterations to the security matrix of the region. In April, the 1960 US-Japan security treaty was given greater strategic depth. The new clauses accord a more assertive military role to Japan in the pursuit of common strategic goals than in the past and the details have been deliberately left vague to accommodate pacifist sentiment in Japan. Concern about Chinese belligerence coupled with the modernisation of the PLA is a perennial challenge to US hegemony and dominates the latest Japanese defence report. However, this anxiety, though real, remains unarticulated in ASEAN out of deference to Chinese sensitivities.

For India, inclusion in ARF is a welcome and logical extension of the look-East policy pursued in the aftermath of Delhi's economic liberalisation programme and the improved political ties with ASEAN, both bilaterally and collectively. All deliberations under the ASEAN banner are tempered by 'musyawarah' and 'mufakat' — consultation and consensus — and as the most recent entrant, India will have to respond to its ARF interlocutors with its characteristic prudence and sagacity. Drawing its members from three continents which represent the six major centres of relevance in a polycentric world (US, China, Russia, EU, Japan, and India) straddled by the, US which is the lone-hegemon, the ARF has the potential to set and steer regional endeavours towards comprehensive and cooperative security.

The interests of the major powers are no doubt involved in a fundamental manner but what is striking about ARF is that despite its nascent status and obvious lack of experience in security deliberations, it has evolved into a significant regional forum at the initiative of a group of developing nations ASEAN. It is interesting that ASEAN, which was created at the behest of the big Western powers in 1967 to contain communism, is now able to co-opt the big boys to constructively engage China.

The ARF deliberations in Jakarta will no doubt bring certain contentious issues to the fore such as Myanmar and nuclear nonproliferation. Despite its marked politico-military dependence on the US, there are differences in perception between the dominant Western view and those held by ASEAN and some compromises may be evolved.

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**Close Attention**

However, more than the differences, ARF has the potential to address Asian security issues in a holistic and empathetic manner respecting local sensitivities. For India, it is a time to listen patiently to its interlocutors and evolve an appropriately judicious response based on a long- term look-East strategy. If ASEAN is based on a sense of harmony which it would like to carry into ARF, India will have to pay close attention to the methodologies adopted.

ASEAN respects both reticence and rectitude in its dealings and is not given to the Western mode for transparent summitry. ARF lays considerable emphasis on Track 2 inter-action and extended consultations, both among its members and with non-governmental agencies. These are traits alien to the Indian establishment, particularly the art of harmonising political, economic and military compulsions in the realisation of national interests. This is a post-Cold War skill that nations are trying to acquire and the Indian track-record does not suggest any noticeable integration or nimbleness — a handicap that the ARF exposure should help redress.

**India: Steps Taken To Check Infiltration From Neighboring States**

*BK2307095596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The home minister, Mr. Indrajit Gupta, admitted in the Lok Sabha today that the infiltration from across the borders continues, though at a reduced rate. He told the members that it is one of the causes of tension in the northeastern region of the country. In a written reply, Mr. Gupta said the infiltration is due to the very long land borders with neighboring countries and because of various push and pull factors. He said the government viewed the problem seriously and has taken measures to curb it.

In reply to another question, the home minister said that the government is also aware of the problem of illegal stay by foreign nationals. Mr. Gupta said states have been asked to launch special drives to identify, detect and deport the foreign nationals staying in the country illegally.

**India: Rao Exempted From Appearing in Court 24 Jul**

*BK2307134396 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A UNI report says the Delhi High Court today granted exemption to former prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, from appearing in the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate [CMM] tomorrow to answer charges in the Lakhubhai Pathak cheating case. Declining Mr. Rao's plea for stay on the trial court proceedings, Mr. Justice S.K. Mahajan, directed that a lawyer be present on his behalf in the CMM's court. The judge clarified that the exemption granted by him is for tomorrow only.

**India: Gowda Announces 'Economic Package' for Kashmir**

*BK2307161296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister today announced an economic package for Jammu and Kashmir. This includes 2,500-crore-rupee railway project from Udhampur to Baramula, taking up of the Mughal Road project, and resuming work on Dulhasti hydroelectric power project. Making an identical statement in both houses of parliament, Mr. Deve Gowda said the 290-km railway line to be completed in 10 years will further integrate the people of Kashmir with the rest of the country. The prime minister informed the members in the Rajya Sabha that the massive railway line being taken up as a national project will be financed by the center outside the railway's plan. Mr. Deve Gowda said the work on the Udhampur-Kathua section will be taken up immediately and the government has provided 200 crore rupees for this. He also announced another scheme to provide an alternative link road between Jammu and Kashmir. The 85-km road is expected to cost over 77 crore rupees. The prime minister informed the house that the work on the first unit of the Uri hydroelectric project is expected to be completed by the end of this year to augment the power supply in the state.

**India: Finance Ministry Officials Defend Budget Proposal**

*BK2407103896 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government has said inflation may go up in the short term between 6 to 6.5 percent because of the prebudget hike in administered prices of petroleum products, but this is no cause for alarm, according to the finance secretary and the chief economic adviser. More details from Madhunath on the postbudget press conference.

[Begin recording] [Madhunath] The official think tank of the Finance Ministry was in full strength at the customary postbudget press conference. The finance secretary was confident of achieving the new targets of fiscal deficit.

[Finance Secretary] Very hopeful that we will be able to deliver a fiscal deficit of 5 percent of GDP. I do not

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think it is related to any one tax, mainly the deficit — an outcome of the fiscal deficit — depends upon the total outcome of the budget.

[Madhunath] More revenue generation is expected in the coming months due a number of measures, said the revenue secretary, Mr. Shivaraman.

[Shivaraman] You see, we have undertaken a number of measures to plug the loopholes, both under income tax as well as in the central excise tax. And, as we are not in a position to say how much this is going to yield by way of additional revenue, but still we are confident the tax will be more buoyant, both under the direct tax collection and the central excise. And, we expect that as the months go by we should be able to get more revenues out of these measures.

[Madhunath] The chief economic adviser was of the opinion that fiscal deficit is the key to inflation and admitted that six months down the line inflation would move up to 6 percent from the abnormally low levels existing now. The finance secretary was categorical in saying that yesterday's proposals would in no way affect the price of petroleum products.

[Finance Secretary] The package of duty-cum-excise changes on petroleum products will not have an effect on the price of petroleum products. It is designed to be and meant to be revenue-neutral and if it is not revenue-neutral, in the details some adjustment can always be made.

[Madhunath] A need for significant improvement in the delivery system to various social sector infrastructural schemes was spelt by Mr. N.K. Singh, the expenditure secretary.

[N.K. Singh] [words indistinct] of a delivery system will significantly improve if the money which we had been allotted for large irrigation projects, for the National Highway Authority which is to make any significant impact in terms of the quality of the services for which they are [word indistinct] for.

[Madhunath] The finance secretary dismissed the suggestion of any delay in allowing the private sector entry into insurance sector by saying that the necessary groundwork was being created for it. The top brass of the finance ministry was of the opinion that yesterday's budget shall be noninflationary provided the levels of fiscal deficit is maintained at 5 percent of GDP. [end recording]

**India: Budget Initiatives To Improve Industrial Growth Welcomed**

*BK2407061596 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The union finance secretary, Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, has said that the union budget for 1996-97 offers lots of incentives to those who want in invest in infrastructure. Taking part in the phone-in program on the budget over All India Radio last night, he said infrastructure in the country is not up to the mark, and lot more needs to be done in this area.

The Standing Committee of Public Enterprises has welcomed the new initiatives in the budget to maintain and improve the pace of industrial growth. Its chairman, Mr. M. Gopalakrishna, said the setting up of the Infrastructure Development Company for mobilizing resources in the infrastructure sector is a step in the right direction.

The former union minister, Mr. C. Subramaniam, has termed the budget has pro farmer. He said this will lead to job opportunities and improve the purchasing power of rural population.

## Iran

**Iran: Aide Rejects TWA Charge, Views Regional Ties**

*MM2307143796 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Jul 96 p 2*

[Interview with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. 'Abbas Maleki by 'Ali Nuri-Zadeh in London; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Nuri-Zadeh] Some sources have over the past few days pointed to the possibility of Iran's involvement in the TWA plane blast incident which occurred last Wednesday [17 July]. What is your opinion?

[Maleki] We have taken the necessary measures to deny what was published by THE TIMES in this connection. We know the quarters that are trying to damage Iran's image and harm its reputation and standing. The report is completely fabricated, as the newspaper alleged that an Iranian oppositionist who had supplied Western espionage services with information about his country had contacted U.S. security services, alleging that Iran was behind the downing of the U.S. plane, at a time when the U.S. President himself refused to specify the causes or secrets behind the U.S. plane incident. [London THE TIMES in English has not been observed by FBIS to carry such a report.] We do not consider any person spying on his country and seeking to arouse

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hatred and hostility toward Iran a sincere citizen. We have accurate information about these individuals and their affiliations.

[Nuri-Zadeh] Is there always someone behind the accusations leveled at Iran after every bombing or assassination incident in the region?

[Maleki] No. It could be to do with a scheme designed to harm Iran's standing and role, since we have experienced — especially in recent years — a planned campaign against the Islamic Republic through some Western media. The main aim of this campaign is to harm Iran's reputation and revolution. Although these accusations against Iran prove false a few days or weeks later, these allegations against Iran are aimed at harming Iran and Islam in the long term. I think that is what they are hoping to achieve.

[Nuri-Zadeh] Does that mean Iran is now the bad man in world politics after the disappearance of the Soviet Union, which played this part for 80 years?

[Maleki] The forces known for their hostility toward Iran, Islam, and Muslims are trying — by instigating world and Islamic public opinion against Iran and Islam — to justify their expansionist trends and their schemes against our nation's resources, wealth, history, heritage, and religion. Western media services are used as a means to achieve that.

[Nuri-Zadeh] But there are newspapers, magazines, and other media which publish your replies and views.

[Maleki] Certainly. And we appreciate the position adopted by these newspapers, agencies, and radios.

[Nuri-Zadeh] There is one view that your delay in condemning some of the terrorist actions which occurred in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, or Egypt arouses suspicion about your role in supporting and backing extremist groups in the region.

[Maleki] That is untrue. As we are targeted by known terrorist groups espoused — most regrettably — by the civilized and democratic West, we have always been the first to condemn all forms of terrorism. Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati openly condemned the recent incident in al-Khubar, and the Riyadh blast before. This has been our policy over past years.

[Nuri-Zadeh] What about Bahrain's accusations as regards training Hizballah-Bahrain in the Iranian city of Qom and Hizballah camps in Lebanon?

[Maleki] We devote great interest to our relations with our Arab neighbors in the region, and our strong relations with Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar confirm this. We also have relations with Saudi Arabia, the [United Arab] Emirates [UAE], and Bahrain. And we appreciate Saudi Arabia's role in the recent Cairo Arab summit. The stand it adopted toward Israel and its support for the states rejecting the Zionist regime's blackmail have had a positive effect in terms of smoothing relations between the two banks of the Gulf. I visited Bahrain recently to acquaint myself with the complaints of our brothers in Manama. During my meeting with officials there I learned that the complaints were over articles published in our media, some citing foreign agencies and newspapers and others containing interviews conducted by our media with Bahraini oppositionists.

After my return to Iran and meeting with President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister Dr. Velayati to brief them on the matter, clear instructions were issued to the media not to publish anything that harms Bahrain. That situation was maintained until Bahrain surprised us by the television confessions and the other things which I do not have to mention again. The important thing is that our Syrian brothers' mediation to eliminate the misunderstandings has had tangible success.

[Nuri-Zadeh] Does that mean the return of Ambassador Torkabadi to Manama and of Bahrain's ambassador to Tehran?

[Maleki] There are issues, including the return of the two countries' ambassadors, which will be discussed soon. I have great hopes that our relations with our fraternal neighbor Bahrain will return to their normal status soon.

[Nuri-Zadeh] While Syrian mediation has succeeded in calming the situation with Bahrain, it seems that it has failed to achieve its second aim. I am talking about the mediation between you and Cairo.

[Maleki] Egypt occupies a prominent place in our hearts because it is a major Islamic, Arab, and African state. When I visited Cairo last year and met with thinkers, writers, professors, clerics, and some officials, I felt that points of agreement between us exceeded those of disagreement, and I still believe the same. Because numerous senior officials in Egypt, in addition to men of religion, intellectuals, writers, and journalists, want to develop relations between their country and the Islamic Republic. They share the same feeling we had before. Iran and Egypt are two big regional powers which should be bound by strong ties. Our welcome for the Syrian mediation was based on our appreciation of Egypt's stand, whether at the Sharm al-Shaykh summit or before that, when it confronted Washington's and Tel Aviv's blackmail with regard to the Iranian nuclear reactors and the use of the atom for peaceful purposes, and recently at the Cairo summit. The further Cairo moves from Israel, the closer it moves toward us. So

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the Syrian mediation, which enjoyed our full approval, was launched, but most regrettably one of the Egyptian president's advisers made statements which reminded us of the demands we receive from states hostile toward us. We set no conditions for Cairo, nor do we accept any conditions. At any rate, the ball is now in Egypt's court. I hope that Egypt will restore its standing in the forefront of the Islamic states rejecting Israeli arrogance and U.S. hegemony.

[Nuri-Zadeh] Is there any move on your part toward Algeria, and what about the mediation between you and Algeria?

[Maleki] It was Algeria which severed its relations with us under the pretext of our interference in its internal security. Four years have elapsed since, but the crisis is still continuing, which proves that the allegations about our support for the government's opponents are weak. Algeria used to be one of our closest friends. Algeria was our hope in the Algiers agreement issue and the release of our frozen funds in the United States. [sentence as published] And it represented our interests in Washington for more than 10 years. We hope the Muslim Algerian people will surmount their predicament, and we pray to God to restore security, stability, and prosperity to that great country, the country of the million martyrs. But just as the estrangement was started by the other party, any move to restore relations between the two countries must be made by the same party.

[Nuri-Zadeh] Does that mean that the Syrian mediation initiative did not include Algeria?

[Maleki] Yes.

[Nuri-Zadeh] There is also information about your cooperation with Sudan in security and military spheres. Western and Arab media have published several reports about camps set up to train fundamentalists under the supervision of the Revolutionary Guard in Sudan. What are the dimensions of your relations with Sudan?

[Maleki] I was in Sudan a few days ago, where I met with senior officials, including parliament Speaker Dr. Hasan al-Turabi. They briefed me on recent measures in Sudan which have helped to improve relations between Sudan and both Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Our relations with Sudan fall within the framework of our strategy of establishing strong relations with the Arab and Islamic worlds. Sudan is a rich country in terms of its land and waters, and we can help the Sudanese people to utilize their resources. There are experts and technicians working in the agriculture and road building sphere. President Hashemi-Rafsanjani agreed with President 'Umar al-Bashir to help Sudan to construct a new road linking the north with the south. Is this a military action? I visited technical training and scientific rehabilitation centers established by the construction jihad organization in Sudan, where Sudanese women receive religious education and technical training on dressmaking, textile gilding, computers, and other subjects. I hope Sudan will recover from the war imposed on its southern region by quarters hostile toward Islam.

[Nuri-Zadeh] Iran was at war with Iraq for eight years, followed by seven years of neither war nor peace. What is the latest regarding your relations with Baghdad?

[Maleki] We have ordinary ['adiyah] diplomatic relations with Iraq. But there are obstacles hampering the establishment of normal [tabi'iyah] relations between the two countries.

The Security Council imposed restrictions on dealings with Iraq; we must observe these restrictions, since we are a UN member state. The policies pursued by Iraq have created obstacles, as Baghdad refused to discuss the position of our POW's in Iraq. This is in addition to its support for terrorists. As long as these obstacles are there, it will remain difficult to achieve rapprochement between the two countries. However, contacts could continue, and we will define our position toward Baghdad in the light of their results.

[Nuri-Zadeh] Is there a new initiative to settle the dispute with the UAE over the islands [Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa]?

[Maleki] We have on several occasions announced our willingness to discuss the misunderstanding over the implementation of our previous agreements on Abu Musa island. The matter does not require mediation. Our relations with the UAE are vital and comprehensive in all spheres, and we are confident that the two countries are capable of settling the matter by themselves.

[Nuri-Zadeh] What causes the repetition of the misunderstanding between Iran and neighboring Arab states?

[Maleki] Most regrettably, while we present an honorable picture of the Arabs in our books and encourage the teaching of the Arabic language and the spread of Islamic culture, the picture presented about Iran in Arab books and newspapers is distorted, which is a gross injustice to posterity. We and the Arabs are neighbors, indeed brothers, and we must understand one another and respect one another's feelings. Do Arabs have a better friend than Iran?

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**Iran: Majles Deputies on Turkish Raid**

*NC2307093696 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 10 Jul 96 p 2*

[FBIS Translated Text] In an interview with our parliamentary correspondent yesterday, Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Nateq-Nuri said:

The attack by Turkish helicopters on our country's border areas is an incident that definitely took place. It has been discussed in the National Security Council and it was decided that a joint Iranian-Turkish commission would follow up the matter.

The Majles speaker added: When the incident took place, the Turkish ambassador was immediately summoned to the Foreign Ministry and asked to give an explanation. He contacted his government and conveyed answers from some Turkish officials that were not very convincing. This is why it was decided that a joint commission be formed to examine the issue.

Pointing out that this is the second time that the Turkish regime has aggressed our borders, the Majles speaker stressed: This is not the first time. Another attack was carried out in the past against our border areas, after which a joint commission was formed to examine the matter. The outcome of its work was favorable and good steps were taken on that basis.

In answer to a question on whether such attacks on our border areas stem from the political inconsistencies in Ankara or not, the Majles speaker said: Since the nature of the issue is still not clear, and the Turkish side is denying that an attack was carried out against our border area — it has not yet accepted this, while we say that it has taken place and that people were martyred and wounded in this incident — we should wait and see what the outcome of the said commission's examination will be and then decide.

In conclusion, the Majles speaker said: I hope that this joint commission will be able to achieve a favorable outcome.

Dr. Mohammad Javad Ardeshir Larijani, member of the Majles Foreign Policy Commission, said that the attack by Turkish helicopters stemmed from the carelessness of the Turkish officials and military and security forces, and called on the statesmen in Ankara to prevent the repetition of such attacks in the future.

Referring to the election of Necmettin Erbakan and the vote of confidence he received from the Turkish parliament, he said: Turkey is stepping in a new path that will revive the prestige of the country and of the Muslim Turkish nation in the world of Islam. This will naturally have an impact on relations between this Muslim country and its neighboring countries, and especially Iran.

The member of the Majles Foreign Policy Commission stressed: Naturally, the attack by Turkish helicopters on our border areas is an extremely important issue for us. But, we foresee brighter horizons for Turkey in the future.

Dr. Larijani added: As far as the attack is concerned, we should presume that Turkish statesmen and any faction that rules in Turkey consider it to be in their interest to have good relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, because the national interests of both countries are tied together.

The Majles deputy added: Border incidents are regrettable and should be carefully considered so that they do not go beyond their limits.

Dr. Larijani expressed hopes that the Turkish officials and military and security forces will be more careful in the future and will avoid such incidents and said: We are sure that after carefully examining the facts, the Turkish Government will pay special attention to paying compensation to the victims of the incident.

Larijani stressed: Iran and Turkey should regard this attack only as a passing incident and follow-up its consequences.

He said: All of the Turkish Government's efforts should concentrate on how to prevent the repetition of similar incidents in the future.

In answer to a question on why Turkey has not learned a lesson from the previous attack that it carried out, the Majles deputy said:

Definitely the two countries' national interests dictate that Iran and Turkey have very good relations, coupled with understanding and good neighborliness. Such incidents should be considered as passing incidents that stem from a lack of attention. Efforts should be made to prevent their repetition and to compensate for losses incurred.

Urumiyeh Deputy Shahrbanu Amani said: Since we have friendly relations with Turkey, the reason why this incident occurred should be sought and the Turkish helicopters' attack on our triable areas, which led to the martyrdom of two women and one child and the wounding of 19 people, should be seriously examined.

She added: Following the incident, I immediately went to the scene of the crime and saw the mutilated bodies of the victims who were being buried in Bagh-e Rezvan.

Mrs. Amani stressed: Naturally, the esteemed leader and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran will not

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overlook even one drop of blood that was so unjustly shed. I expect this issue to be immediately examined.

In answer to a question on the fact that Turkey said that the attack on our defenseless border residents was an attack on opposition members, she said: The Turkish regime may make such an allegation. But it should prove it.

She stated: Such incidents should not be repeated by the Turkish regime in the future. Definitely these incidents are linked with Turkey's domestic problems, and we hope that with the stand that our foreign ministry will adopt, they will be prevented in the future.

Mrs. Amani pointed out: Israel has a base in Turkey. Therefore, such incidents by the Turkish regime are unacceptable by our people, who consider them to be the outcome of Israeli instigations.

The Majles deputy said: During the burial of the martyrs of this incident, the people of Urumiyeh intended to send a petition to the United Nations in condemnation of Turkey's crimes in attacking our border areas and in order to vindicate the Islamic Republic's rights.

In conclusion, she thanked the military, security, and executive officials for having gone to the area where the incident had taken place and for having attended the burial of the martyred people.

Engineer Vartan Vartanian, deputy of the Armenians of the north, stated in relation to this: Turkey's policies are within the framework of the general policies of world arrogance and are against the Islamic Republic of Iran. This is not a novelty for our country. We expected such behavior by Turkey, in view of the fact that recently these policies have been intensified in the form of anti-Iranian plans in foreign circles and especially in American and Zionist circles, as well as in the form of the air agreement between the Zionist regime and Turkey.

Regarding the repetition of such incidents, the deputy of the Armenian minority said: Turkey is resorting to mischief and perpetrating incidents not only on the border areas. Many regrettable acts have been perpetrated by Turkey's diplomats on Iranian territory, and a good example of this is the arrest of a spy network comprising people who were apparently the official representatives of that country in Iran.

Vartanian stressed: The adoption of a decisive stand by our country can definitely be effective in preventing such incidents by the Turkish regime. Many Armenians have gone to the foreign ministry and asked that a suitable stand be adopted to prevent such incidents in the future.

Engineer Sham'un Mas'udpur, deputy of the Assyrians, also commented on the same issue and said: The Turkish Government's acts are regrettable. It is not the first time that the Ankara regime has perpetrated such crimes. In the past too a number of our compatriots were killed because of Turkey's dastardly attacks.

He said: The time has come for the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to react, as is only fair and right, so that such instigations will be prevented in the future. Otherwise, if we let them pass, we should only expect more such incidents by the Turkish regime in the future.

The Majles deputy stressed: Our officials can react through various political and diplomatic channels and, if necessary, complain to international forums. In this case, this may be the most suitable way for the government to react.

Commenting on Turkey's policy of crushing the Kurds on Iraqi territory, he said: Iran is not the base of the Kurds who are fighting against Turkey, and it is to be safe from the Turkish Government's massacres and killings that they enter Iraqi or Iranian territories. But this is not a certainty as far as Iran is concerned. Turkey should prove this. Iran has refuted these allegations and has said that the Turkish opposition does not have any place in Iran. If Turkey is pursuing its opponents on Iranian territory, it is violating the sovereignty of a neighboring country; and it has no right to do so.

**Iran: Reported Explosions in Zahedan**

*96LA0279J London KEYHAN in Persian 23 May 96 p 2*

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the newspapers of the Islamic Republic, last Monday [21 May], as a result of the explosion of "a suspicious object" in front of a restaurant in Zahedan, four people were injured.

Based on the same reports, last Thursday [16 May], too, in the city of Khash, an explosion occurred but did not cause any casualties. The press of the regime has not provided more explanation about these explosions.

**Iran: Need for Islamic Unity, Role of OIC Session in Tehran Viewed**

*NC2307093696 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 10 Jul 96 p 16*

[Unattributed commentary: "Islamic Unity"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the past few centuries unity among Islamic governments has become less tangible.

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A colonialist policy of discord and subservience, "indifference", ambition, and the suspicious nature of the political officials ruling over Muslim nations have pushed Islamic unity further away.

During the past few days the world's political-news circles — some out of concern and others out of interest — have been granting top priority in their news and analyses to the issue of unity between the Arabs and Iran. This issue requires a review of political developments in the Middle East during the past two months.

In the elections in the second part of Khordad [June] this year, Binyamin Netanyahu beat Shim'on Peres, the heir of the equation of land for peace. His 13-point plan increased Arab concern over the failure of the compromise process. The extremist Zionist prime minister stated his overt stances on the Middle East compromise process — most notably in articles referring to an independent Palestinian entity, withdrawal from the Golan Heights and Southern Lebanon, and an end to the construction of settlements. Again some Muslim political circles praised the Islamic Republic's anticompromise stance and called for a new definition of the Zionists' identity and objectives and the need to review Arab relations with Tel Aviv. Syria sincerely expressed its wish to strengthen resistance against the regime occupying Jerusalem. But Egypt's tactical game showed Cairo's disinterest in Islamic unity — the unity of a tactic against compromise. The comments by Egyptian officials at the peak of the Syrian foreign minister's sincere efforts showed that Cairo is not burning its bridges. These bridges connect it with Washington through one link-Tel Aviv.

The truth is that any distance between the Iranian nation and Egypt and the other compromising Arab governments stems from their closeness to the Zionists. This subservience led them to give up the Palestinians. This rule still applies. The closer the Arab governments move toward Tel Aviv, the further they distance themselves from Iran; the further they distance themselves from the Zionists, the more they can count on the Iranian nation's friendship.

The message for strengthening relations came from the direction of the Arabs. But ensuing events showed that they made this decision without consulting foreign advisers. Islamic Iran has shown the necessary goodwill in its support for the just positions of the Arabs and Palestinians on the Zionists. But this support should not deviate toward support for the compromise process. The wish for unity with the Arabs can only be assessed in line with the principle of resistance. But if some governments want a tactical and short-term unity to strengthen their bargaining positions in the compromise process, adhering to these positions will only mean participation in the treason against the Palestinian dream. The Arabs, who are competing with one another to adhere to the compromise process and who see peace as a mere mirage, but continue to attach hopes to Tel Aviv and to Washington, will only grant more concessions to Zionism.

Islamic Iran wants an untainted unity with the program and objective of resistance as its nucleus. Following the path of resistance means turning back from the wrong path of compromise. America and the Zionists are worried about Islamic unity. But Egypt's caution has put their minds at rest. As in the past, this is what continues to obstruct Islamic unity and this is what makes the compromisers — irrespective of which government they represent — more vulnerable.

Soon the new round of the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC] session will be held in Tehran, which is the center and pivot of resistance. This conference will grant new opportunities for strengthening the idea of Islamic unity vis-a-vis international Zionism. If the Muslim governments come to Tehran with independence in their decisionmaking and with goodwill to solve the problems of the world of Islam, the OIC session can take a major practical step, contrary to the past.

### Iran: Larijani on Liberalism, Parties

*96LH0208A Tehran KAR VA KARGAR in Persian 16 Apr 96 p 5*

[Interview with Dr. Mohammad Javad Larijani, "expert on political affairs," by KAR VA KARGAR in Larijani's office at the Center for Islamic Consultative Majles Studies; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Mohammad Javad Larijani is an expert on political affairs. He is a studious and very well spoken man and on friendly terms with the newspaper writing community. He does not hesitate to speak frankly, but he is diplomatic.

Unlike many election candidates, he is not given to making accusations against others. When a point of view is subject to criticism, why should this be called an injustice?

Dr. Larijani received us in his beautiful office at the Center for Islamic Consultative Majles Studies.

You will read the outcome of the session below.

[KAR VA KARGAR] As you know, since the exalted leader said in Mashhad "do not send people to the Majles who in the name of liberalism will weaken the foundations of Islamic thought in this country," the

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subject of liberalism has been a topic of discussion in society, and some political groups have been using the term against their rivals. You also dealt with this subject in an article in the special issue on the Militant Clergy Association [Jame'eh Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez]. As an expert, do you consider it correct to use the leader's words in this way, or not? Don't you think that using this slogan is just like the use by some political groups of his holiness the imam's (peace be upon him) "Americanized Islam" slogan during the Third Majles?

[Larijani] With regard to liberalism, in my view we must use the terms correctly and in their proper place. One of the benefits of the elections, apart from the fact that someone gets into the Majles, is that the debates by the political groups bring about public political growth. To a certain extent, the public is not inclined towards liberalism. Even thinkers and writers turn to an idea based on exactitude and deep thought, just as the people to a certain extent are not religious. To a certain extent the people can also have various inclinations. Between the very profound philosophical inclination towards liberalism and the very superficial one, for debate we should choose a middle ground. In reality, liberalism is the mentality that prevails in Western democracies today, and that very attractive slogan says that a liberal system is a rational system seeking to create a civilized structure in which each person is able to think freely and express the outcome of his thoughts. For this reason, he must not be pressured, either by the government or the people. His life is completely personal, and he can behave in any way he wishes in his private life, and as long as what he does does not infringe on the rights of others it will not be considered harmful. They have called this absolute tolerance.

In my view there is a middle ground that we must find. In various years all the intellectuals have been interested in this principle. Sometimes people are really attracted to this slogan with different motivations. Sometimes these motivations are mischievous and sometimes they are very good. I believe that if we want to have an exact criterion for being liberal in terms of political talk and leanings—since the word liberal has other ordinary meanings—the person who within the political structure seeks such a civilized society is liberal in the precise sense of the world. Naturally, someone who is seeking such a civilized structure cannot be in harmony with Islamic thought. We can therefore critique liberalism in two ways, one based on the defects within liberalism itself and the other with regard to its conflicts with Islamic thought and beliefs. Of course in Iran this thinking has had its advocates for the last 150 years, since we first came into contact with the Western world. Some, such as Taqizadeh and Mirza Malkum Khan, supported it. Others put forth a simpler version of it, and perhaps they had religious leanings and wanted to combine these two.

Of course in Islamic thought we do not obstruct thought in any way, but promoting an idea is like any other task. Some ideas can be very dangerous and others can be very useful. Therefore, while we must try to provide an environment in which individuals can think with ease, at the same time we must be sensitive with regard to the spread of ideas. Of course the placing of the two restrictions, national security and public modesty, has brought the principle of absolute tolerance into question to a great extent, and likewise, the principle that a person who thinks like a liberal is without roots also undermines this principle of absolute tolerance.

Other contradictions and problems with the concept are damaging. Reason says that damaging things must not be done, but the denial of prerogatives is not the only criterion for damage. For example financial affairs and matters of life and death, because they can deny prerogatives, can be damaging, but many other things exist that do not deny prerogatives but must be considered damaging. When we want to critique liberalism, these things are adequate for general discussion. In general, it is very clear that the idea of Islamic government, or forming a civilized society based on Islamic reasoning, is in conflict with the fundamentals of the idea of liberalism. This is my interpretation of liberalism and the reason for its conflict and incompatibility with Islamic thought. Of course the public, in its complex way of thinking, has ideas at various levels about what it means to be a liberal. Some take a more complex approach, and others simply call anyone they do not like a liberal.

[KAR VA KARGAR] You have mentioned public use of the term "liberal," but in a society like ours, in which civil society has had weak growth, political groups have used this concept as a tool to weaken their rivals, and mostly in election rivalries. The reason for this is that because of this very weak growth in civil society, quarrels between political groups have become very channeled and are not very clear or specific. Sometimes they use the term "liberal" to accuse their rivals. Whoever thinks a little bit more openly, whoever permits others to express ideas and who raises his tolerance a little is accused of being a liberal. Unfortunately, this atmosphere was also created in the last elections. What is your specific view on this?

[Larijani] In the literature that has been promoted in the last few years in our country, ideas have existed that have not clearly presented religious society as a suitable experiment. They have even said that it causes non-religious behavior, and they have officially declared

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that the best society is one in which religion is given to the people as an edifice for the hereafter, and where the government has the responsibility of creating security to permit the public to grow. In my view, this idea is a perfect expression of being liberal, and ideas like this have been widely presented in books, magazines and articles in the newspapers. In Islam we have both tolerance and intolerance. Islam has no problem with someone thinking and debating in these areas.

However, the question is, is there a place in the seminaries and university classrooms for promoting these things among the people as new issues, when they are not really new and have a background of 400 years in modern history? These things are clearly worthy of reflection. In my view these issues, especially in the days of the elections, where we must be very careful, are sensitive points.

In his Friday prayer sermons when Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani invited the candidates to refrain from accusing their rivals, he was giving all of the candidates a very good lesson in ethics.

A point that the exalted leader made in Mashhad requires that all of the political groups reevaluate their ideas. His Excellency warned about ideas which at the first glance are not in apparent conflict with Islamic thought, but are obviously in conflict at the second glance. This is because in the Third World and in the Islamic nations, issues like this are being promoted in various ways, meaning there are motives that go beyond the issue itself.

As a candidate, I do not consider it lawful or permissible under religious law to portray even individuals who are not candidates as liberals. Perhaps at a university debate I could comfortably name all the people I consider to be liberals and I could plainly explain the thinking that leads to being liberal, but the atmosphere of the elections is not an appropriate atmosphere for discussing such issues.

[KAR VA KARGAR] Therefore, do you accept taking a superficial view of liberalism in society?

[Larijani] In connection with all political rivalries and all topics, the disaster could arise that rivals will wish to remove the opposing side from the competition by using any implement or saying anything. It is natural that such a judgment could be made about liberalism.

[KAR VA KARGAR] At a press conference you said that you are open and liberal in foreign policy. Some people have used this press conference to say that your faction is liberal.

[Larijani] My meaning in using the term "liberal" in that press conference was the same as that of the word "open." Right now I do not remember everything I said in that press conference, but in principle I explained what the intent was. In this regard I will relate a matter to clarify the issue. In the 60s in America they arrested the communists. The Americans ousted anyone they wished to remove by using the label "leftist." There was a teacher who was campaigning against the Vietnam war. He applied and was tested academically for employment at a school. After he was accepted in an oral test he was asked if he wrote for the left, and he answered "unfortunately I am a leftist." Then the newspapers in the city wrote that a certain school was about to hire a leftist teacher. Then they jeered him and expelled him.

In this interview, my use of the term "liberal" had nothing to do with the principle of "liberalism." My point was that in foreign policy we have a framework of principles and a series of practical fundamentals. Our framework of principles is very clear, and it has two objectives: 1. preserving the government as an Islamic government; and 2. profound support and protection from the world's Islamic movement. These two objectives are among the priceless gains of the Islamic revolution. As long as we pursue these objectives, our foreign policy is principled. It is possible that at some point we will make a mistake in determining what step to take in the pursuit of goals. If so, it will not be possible to say that we acted in an unprincipled way. They will say that a mistake has been made in practice. Therefore, as long as the framework exists, our foreign policy is principled. With respect to planning, an open and liberal foreign policy is one in which we assume we are living in an international society, and there are other factors in this family. We must pursue those two goals and motivations in such a way that they have a kind of compatibility to the extent possible with a comprehensive life.

In reality, our art of diplomacy will be in the fact that we act in pursuit of our goals in principle, while even in this society we create the greatest degree of coexistence. It is on this basis that in the world our slogan in principle is friendship unless a country like America is hostile to us, or a government like the Zionist regime is illegitimate.

The reason for the importance of discussing this issue is that some of our friends, who are combatants for the revolution, believe that the world is divided into the world of unbelief and the world of Islam, and that our relationship with the world of unbelief is defined by war. This view is not outside of those principles, but it is an ineffective and inadequate program. The theory of an open foreign policy within the framework of the principles of the revolution's foreign policy is based on

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the view that we live in an international family and that while pursuing our goals we must act in such a way that we will have the least amount of friction with the rest of the family in the international society. Of course in cases where there is no possibility of establishing relations, one cannot establish relations.

In the economic domain also, if we are to have a large government which produces everything from soap to tanks, the cost of this government will be high and its efficiency will be insignificant. We should therefore turn over to the private sector those sectors which are important to the national interest and which create no problems for national security. This should be done with the part of the private sector that has clear operations, not the part that hides billions of tumans under the table and has no responsibility to the government. The two important pillars of the theory of economic adjustment are clarity in economic operations and bringing economic weight into the economic operations.

Therefore, when we want to do something, this task and operation must be done from the standpoint of economic weight, and we must get involved in the decision-making. However, I am opposed to the idea that we should sell the government to the private sector or sell government resources, and we have also dealt with that in the Majles.

[KAR VA KARGAR] At the beginning of the elections for the Fifth Majles there was a debate about parties, political organizations and political categories. That is, a kind of clash of opinions developed without the political groups having clear positions. Don't you think this will lead to the formation of political parties?

[Larijani] In my view, before we form political parties, we should think of public political participation. Public political participation is expressed differently based on the conditions and social structure in each country, and one of the political expressions is the formation of political parties.

Here, there are two concepts that must not be confused. One is the concept of a political party. A party must be formed around a specific idea. The people who are interested in that idea will vote for that party. This in itself will facilitate the elections for the people. Another concept that exists in our society which is used in place of that of the political party is the political club. The political club is not based on an idea. It is a group of individuals who have similar ideas in some way, who have worked together and among whom there is mutual confidence. A political club is not clear on political issues, and it is difficult to draw boundaries in this group.

Today in the country we see budding organizations and political parties which can become good political parties if they grow. Of course we must not limit the matter of political participation to political parties. For example, in the structure of our country, especially in the small cities and rural areas, the people go to the mosques and the clergy. These can be very good places for informing the people and having serious debates. In the second round of the recent elections I went to some of the municipalities and saw that very crowded meetings were being held in the mosques with animated and beautiful debates on the issues of the elections. These meetings are very good. The Islamic councils which are to be formed in the future will be a very appropriate place for public political organizations and political participation.

In my view, the matter of political participation goes beyond the formation of political parties. Political parties are an experiment that has grown in the Western democratic nations in the contemporary era. While political parties are an appropriate tool for public political participation, political parties are also one of the frameworks that can give structure to a society's civilization in an organized way. Of course this political party must grow in a natural way.

The experience with political parties in Iran has not been successful. Usually when parties have become active it has been in the form of clubs or fronts. For this reason, they quickly died, or as in the case of the Tudeh Party, they were connected abroad. I do not consider the experiment with political parties in Iran to be successful because they do not mesh with our social structure. Now political parties are gradually sprouting in Iran, and God willing, in the future political parties which are clear about their principles will grow.

[KAR VA KARGAR] You mentioned the unsuccessful experiment with political parties in Iran. We have had political parties since the Constitutional Revolution, but we have never had political parties in the true sense except the Tudeh Party. You also mentioned the enthusiasm among the rural people for participation in the debates at mosque meetings on the issues of the elections. In my view, this enthusiasm goes back to some extent to the clannishness and ethic cohesion in the small cities, while as you said, individuals in political parties come together around an idea, a program or an ideology, and their goal is to obtain political power. Before the formation of political parties, there is something called political culture and a political mind set, which began in Europe perhaps in the 18th century with John Locke and led to Europe's civilization. Don't you think the culture of participatory politics in Iran is the main reason political parties have not taken hold? It is only in the atmosphere of the elections that the matter of po-

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litical parties is discussed in the newspapers, and then they are forgotten. In other words, the political culture of participation has not been established in our country, and neither the nation nor the government is that motivated in this area. How do you assess the hesitation on this matter?

[Larijani] Of course in the small cities the public's interest in politics is not confined to ethnic issues, even though it is like this in some places. This shows that the people do not think only in ethnic terms everywhere, and that they have political interests. At the same time we must remember that the U.S., Russian, and English embassies governed our country for at least 150 years. Naturally, public political participation was not important to them. Civil bodies for public political participation formed in general after the Islamic revolution, and this was one of the gifts of the revolution. Naturally, these bodies are the seedlings and sprouts that must gradually grow. Educated individuals, political people who write and those active in politics must encourage the proper growth of the political culture. In short, within the framework of Islamic thought, we must practice together the art of being different among ourselves. Without this we cannot have political growth. For us to differ among ourselves and work for the Islamic government needs time, and God willing, this will gradually be achieved.

**Iran: Deputies Trying To Form Independent Faction in Majles**

*LD2307163196 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 18 Jul 96 p 1, 13*

["Independent faction being shaped in Majles"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran: A number of experts and experienced deputies are trying to form an independent faction in the Majles, a parliamentary deputy said here yesterday.

'Ali Asghar Yusefnejad, a deputy from Sari, Mazandaran Province told 'Iran News' yesterday that "Negotiations are continuing and the articles of association of the party have been drawn up, but the main objective of the new faction is to follow the ordinances of the Supreme Jurisprudent (Velayat-e Faqih)."

He said the faction is made up of experts with solid executive backgrounds who intend to study and scrutinize the measures proposed for ratification in the Majles, adding that they will do so without allowing their own political and factional inclinations to interfere with their duties.

Yusefnejad said the existence of such a faction in the Majles is very important because its members can examine the proposed bills from an experts' point of view and provide other deputies with relevant and specialized information.

"This faction does not belong to any political groupings or parties, but when examining a bill they may throw their support to one or more of the other factions in the Majles," the MP noted.

He said what is important for this independent faction are the issues affecting the country and the people, not political manoeuvres and tendencies.

He said the exact number of members of the new independent faction is not yet known, "but they are growing." Yusefnejad added that their numbers are more or less the same as the other Majles factions.

"The elections have shown that none of the parties in the Majles have achieved a majority, and none will, unless they convince the independent deputies to joint their camp," he said, adding: "In my opinion the independent deputies are floating freely and any move on their part towards the direction of other factions will have a decisive effect on the outcome and resolution of issues discussed in the parliament."

Yusefnejad said the independent faction will start its legislative activities after the Majles summer holidays on 24th September.

**Iran: Aide—Rafsanjani Should Return to Majles After Term Expires**

*LD2307161296 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 18 Jul 96 p 1, 13*

["Majles is the Most Suitable Place for Rafsanjani, Alviri"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] "The most suitable place for Mr. [Akbar] Hashemi [Rafsanjani] is the House of the People or the Majles, after expiry of his term as the president," commented a leading political activist, referring to President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

A close sympathizer of the Servants of Construction or the G-6, Morteza Alviri said, "After the end of his tenure as president, Mr. Hashemi can become a candidate at mid-term elections at one of the constituencies to find a way into the Majles."

In an interview with 'Iran News,' Alviri — adviser to the president — responded to a question as to what will be the next post for Rafsanjani when he completes his second term as president.

The constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran does not allow one person to run for a third consecutive term of presidency.

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"Mr Hashemi enjoys special popularity at home and abroad," Alviri, secretary general of the Free Trade Zones (FTZ), said.

Rafsanjani's term of office is to end next [Iranian calendar] year [beginning 21st March 1997] in August. He was Majles speaker in the first, second and third terms of the Majles.

"He has rendered precious services to the country and the revolution, and the period of his presidency will be recorded in Iran's history as a golden era, particularly in relation to development and construction," he said.

Alviri was a Fifth Majles candidate from the Tehran constituency but did not win in the elections held last March [1996].

In response to another question, Alviri said, "Based on the Constitution, the Islamic Republic is a parliamentary system which allows the formation of parties and political groups as an inseparable part of the system. The political atmosphere should be prepared for the formation of parties that are ready to act within the framework of the constitution."

Alviri denied the possibility that the G-6 would turn into a political party.

"A political party takes shape when its founders are politically, economically and culturally unanimous; otherwise, it will break into branches after some time," he maintained.

"I do not see such unanimity among the G-6," Alviri said, adding, "The G-6 did not intend to set up [a] party during election time."

Rather, the G-6 political move was based on the sense of religious and national duty, he remarked.

"By fighting at the elections, they intended to make the election process more fervent and to nominate candidates who believed in the country's construction and economic development notwithstanding their different political outlooks," he said.

"The ground is fully prepared for the formation of a party fostering development," Alviri pointed out.

"Such a party will pay heed to Islamic and revolutionary values, while, in the meantime considering construction and economic development as an inevitable necessity on the threshold of the 21st century," he stressed.

**Iran: Majles Approves Funds for Rural Power Network**

*LD2307154096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] In today's open session of the Majles, the proposed bill on the supplementary clause to the note of the country's budget bill for 1375 [20 March 1996-21 March 1997] was debated in the first round, and its general principles were passed. The proposed bill stipulates that the sum of 40 billion rials, drawn from the Energy Ministry's development fund, be allocated to the provinces for the purposes of expanding rural electricity networks. According to the bill, the Energy Ministry is dutybound to use this credit for developing the electricity networks of villages and give priority to regions that have larger concentrations of households than others.

Today's session also debated, in the first round, the proposed bill on amending the law concerning the listing of public institutions and organizations, passed in 1373 [21 March 94-19 March 95], and approved the general principles of this bill. The subject of the bill is to add the name: Institution of the Esteemed Leader's Representative in Universities and Higher Education Centers [nehad-e namayandegi-ye maqam-e mo'azam-e rahbari dar daneshgahha va marakez-e amuzesh-e ali], to the list of public institutions.

The Majles open session also approved one of the double-urgencies attached to a proposed bill on receiving two percent of the price of green tea leaves from tea planters and using it to build and develop that same region.

**Iran: Industries Minister Calls for Stronger Private Sector**

*LD2307163996 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 18 Jul 96 p 3*

["Ne'matzadeh calls for stronger private sector"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, 17 July — The minister of industries on Tuesday [16 July] called for a strong and efficient private sector to help improve the country's economic climate.

Mohammad Reza Ne'matzadeh, in a meeting with officials of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines (ICCIM) here criticized the lack of legislation in this regard and said: "Through a set of strong and consolidated laws we must improve the activities of the private sector."

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Reiterating the need for and significance to boost private enterprise, Ne'matzadeh said: "Unless a strong private sector is not created in the country, the work of (attracting private) investments will not flourish."

The minister predicted industrial growth for the present Iranian year (March 1996-97) at 10 percent which he attributed to the volume of letters of credit established during the current year for imports of raw materials and an appropriate allocation of foreign exchange.

"Since early this year, 640 million dollars has been earmarked for diverse industrial purposes and investors functioning on the 'buy-back' system will not have hard currency restrictions", he told ICCIM officials from across the country.

With regard to the prevailing economic problems in the country, the minister said there is no alternative but to increase non-oil exports which has also been announced by the leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i.

Openly criticizing some trading regulations and the rigid bureaucracy vis-a-vis exports, Ne'matzadeh asked: "Why should there be need for authorization from the ministry of commerce for the export of each item?"

The industries minister urged lawmakers and relevant authorities to curtail red tape and unfriendly export regulations and demonstrate more flexibility.

**Iran: Mines Minister on Sponged Iron Production**

*LD2307204596 Tehran IRNA in English 1930 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 23, (IRNA) — Minister of Mines and Metals Mohammad Hoseyn Mahluji said here on Tuesday [23 July] that Unit 2 of the Qa'em Sponged Iron Mill will go on stream next month with the annual production of 600,000 tons.

He said production of sponged iron is a modern method initiated by Iran for the first time to produce steel and that Iranian experts have designed and carried out 100 percent of the said project.

Mahluji said the cost of producing sponged iron is 20 dollars lower than the other methods for each ton of iron output.

Meanwhile, managing-directior of National Steel Company 'Ali Shakar-Riz said that production of iron plates at the Mobarekeh steel complex of Isfahan has reached 700,000 tons in the past four months.

He said the Mobarakeh steel complex would provide the Ministry of Petroleum with 200,000 tons of iron plates needed in producing gas and oil pipes.

**Iran: Former Tobacco Bureau Head Convicted**

*96LH0180A Tehran KAR VA KARGAR in Persian 14 Mar 96 p 3*

[FBIS Translated Text] News Service—'Ali Asghar Samet, former executive director of the Tobacco Bureau, was sentenced to two years definite imprisonment and the payment of $13,013,000 to the government, by order of Branch 3 of the Tehran Islamic Revolutionary Court.

In violation of the law, 'Ali Asghar Samet undertook to establish a representative office in Dubayy, sent 60 tons of tobacco there valued at $900,000, and allocated monthly funds for salaries and other expenses at this office. 'Ali Asghar Samet's criminal behavior is thus established.

With respect to the taking of a kickback and its prohibition in foreign transactions, the accused is convicted of returning $6.3 million to the government and of buying apartments on Martyr Bahonar Street, on Martyr Kolahduz Street for a total of 590 million rials [R] and a home in London for a total of £270,000 out of the kickback funds. This was recorded exactly in the interest of the government and these sums (R590 million in addition to the £270,000) will be deducted from the $6.3 million.

The defendant claims that of this $7 million, $4.5 million was given to the RJR Company after a period time. RJR has confirmed that it received these funds from Mr. Samet and that they are being kept in a special account. Therefore, just as RJR acknowledges that it paid these funds to the Tobacco Bureau or accepted them as payment for its debts, under this conviction of $7 million, Mr. Samet is required to repay these funds taken from the bureau.

Concerning the other accusations, because of the lack of adequate evidence, Mr 'Ali Asghar Samet was acquitted on the principle of innocence.

It is worth mentioning that in addition to the kickbacks taken, Mr. Samet and his colleagues were to have taken $14,023,700 for the Tobacco Bureau's contracts, but because of Samet's detention they were not able to do this. Later the Tobacco Bureau took discounts and free equipment form the foreign companies in place of these funds.

Investigation of the case was based on a report received from the Ministry of Intelligence in the year 1372 [21 March 1993 - 20 March 1994]. In the month of Tir 1372 [22 June - 22 July] 'Ali Asghar Samet was summoned to appear before the revolutionary court in Tehran on charges of conspiring with foreign companies selling cigarettes to Iran and taking a kickback, and

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he was investigated. At the first session, he confessed to taking a kickback in the amount of £622. On 14 Tir [5 July] the same year he was arrested because of fear of collaboration with the other participants in the crime and was detained for two months. During this period he and the others involved were investigated. At different stages of the investigation each of the defendants confessed to taking a secret kickback for personal benefit.

Mohammad Hasan Samet, the second-tier defendant, has acknowledged that "I got involved only at the government level and only in two cases, one with Kurmarket [as transliterated] of Germany at the level of a contract because of Germany's legal issues, and after that my brother concealed the matter of the kickback from me and did not do or say anything. Reza Pirayandeh worked with him. In the other case a person named 'Ali Mirkhan, whose brother was involved in the ideological and political division, was my brother's ('Ali Asghar Samet) connection and that of the Swiss company. Another person named Reza Maher also worked with my brother. I was unaware of the details of what they were doing. I spoke with my brother once about taking a kickback. He said there was no obstacle from the point of view of the Islamic Republic. On this principle, I requested help, and I withdrew $185,000 from the existing funds in the Barclay Bank. With regard to the Mullins [as transliterated] Company, he was thinking entirely on his own, and I was involved only in the first stage. In subsequent stages he hid everything about the operation from me.

"'Abbas Ostad-Hoseyni was informed of the entire kickback episode. He bribed and threatened me. He said if I made the slightest move to reveal the facts, he would kill me or assassinate my wife and child.

"My brother 'Ali Asghar was taking a kickback, along with 'Abbas Ostad-Hoseyni and Pirayandeh. Since my brother betrayed me and did not give me my pay, I personally withdrew $185,000 from the Barclay Bank. I told him that if he did not give me a share in this contract I would take legal action or report the matter to Iran. When they saw that I was serious, they gave me $200,000. My brother said that if the deal fell through I would have to give the money back. Of course Ostad-Hoseyni and my brother were very unhappy about this situation. My brother said that I must not disgrace my family and expose him, and Ostad-Hoseyni threatened me with assassination and the kidnapping of my wife and child."

Another defendant, 'Ali Mirkhan, said in his confession: "On the recommendation of 'Ali Asghar Samet, I was to be the intermediary in purchasing cigarettes from Rimsama Shum. I asked them to let me be their representative. They said this was not possible but they were willing to sign a consulting contract with me. However, they said that because of the monopoly on smoking materials in Iran, they were not able to give me a contract.

"In any case, after much negotiation, arrangements were made for me to buy 15 billion packs from Rimsama. I conveyed the information to 'Ali Asghar Samet, the executive director of the Tobacco Bureau. He said that whatever I could get for charity affairs would be considered a good deed. I said to the officials at Rimsama that they should put aside some funds for the executive director himself ('Ali Asghar Samet) to be used for charity affairs. Arrangements were made that they would give me 30 pfennigs for each 100,000 packs of cigarettes, as well as 20 pfennigs for charity affairs to be given to Samet.

"After shipping two four-billion-pack lots of cigarettes to Iran and making arrangements to contract the third lot, Samet noticed that I had also gotten 30 pfennigs. Therefore his behavior gradually changed. One night he invited me to his home. He said: Our brotherhood remains the same, but from this date forward you do not have the right to make any kind of contact with Rimsama. Rimsama paid two million marks for the first four billion packs, of which 1.2 million marks were my share and 800,000 marks were Samet's share.

"I did not have any kind of representative function from the Rimsama Company; the Tobacco Bureau was also unaware that Samet and I were involved and taking a kickback. The consulting contract that Rimsama had written and kept in its own possession was also only a formality, because I had no contact with the Tobacco Bureau Board of Directors."

In his remarks, Mohammad Reza Maher wrote: "Samet proposed a kickback of five percent at the Hamburg Four Seasons Hotel, where parties from the Rimsama Company were staying. After negotiations, the Rimsama Company agreed that it would pay 40 pfennigs for each 1,000 cigarettes, of which four pfennigs was my share and 36 pfennigs was Mr. Samet's share. My share for the purchase of the cigarettes from the Rimsama Company was 140,000 marks, of which I received 120,000 marks in cash.

"I also got 300,000 marks or a little more for aluminum, of which I paid 150,000 marks to Mr. Samet.

"We also used to buy machinery from the two German Courber [as transliterated] companies and the Swiss TMC company, for which the German Courber company was to pay a 10 percent kickback, of which 3

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percent was my share and 7 percent was Mr. Samet's share, and the Swiss TMC Company was to pay a 9 percent kickback, of which 2.7 percent was my share and 6.3 percent was Mr. Samet's share.

"The Board of Directors of the Tobacco Bureau had no knowledge of the taking of kickbacks and their expenditures.

**(to be continued)**

News Service—In last Thursday's issue you read about 'Ali Asghar Samet, former executive director of the Tobacco Bureau. The judge of Branch 3 of the Tehran Islamic Revolutionary Court sentenced him to two years definite imprisonment and the payment of a fine of $13.3 million.

The judge of the court issued the following sentences for the other six defendants:

Since Mohammad Hasan Samet, brother of the top-level defendant, was not in court, and his file is being studied.

Mohammad Reza Maher was sentenced to the payment of three million marks to the government on charges of taking part in government financial corruption and taking a kickback.

'Abbas Ostad-Hoseyni is charged with taking part in financial corruption, taking a kickback in the amount of $1.5 million, taking part in selling at high prices and selling outside the cigarette distribution network. The latter was being prosecuted, and due to the fact that he has a file connected with spying for foreigners, his file is being studied in this court.

'Abdollah Ostad-Hoseyni was also sentenced to the repayment of the amount taken (the kickback) to the government, on charges of taking part in government financial corruption and taking a kickback in the amount of $400,000.

Dr. Ahmad Moqadam was charged with taking part in financial corruption and taking a kickback in the amount of 1,865,563 marks. Since the latter was the official attorney for a German company and the funds he received were paid as attorney's fees, he was acquitted of the charges.

'Ali Mirkhan was accused of taking part in government financial corruption, taking kickbacks in the amount of 1.2 million marks and participating in selling foreign cigarettes at high prices, but the charges against him were not proven and the court acquitted him.

In confessing to the taking of kickbacks by himself and Mr. Samet, 'Abbas Ostad-Hoseyni said: "Before the revolution I knew Samet and associated with him. When Samet became governor-general of Zanjan after the revolution, our association became greater and Mr Samet sold me a Peykan automobile out of the quantity rationed to the office of the governor-general. Some time later Samet became the governor of Tehran. He brought several individuals with him to the office of the governor of Tehran. For several months the Tehran Governor's Office was not willing to hire them, and no salary was paid to them. To save face for Mr Samet, for several months I paid their salaries, and I was very concerned about Mr. Samet's reputation. He even borrowed one million tumans from the Industrial Credit Bank for a stone-cutting factory and has not made the payments. I gave Mr. Samet a bank check for 200,000 tumans and told him to give it to the bank as payment on his debt.

"My association with Mr. Samet in Tehran continued until he became executive director of the Tobacco Bureau and arrangements were made that we buy cigarettes from Bulgaria through me. Initially the Bulgarians were not willing. I offered to give them the Bahman formula. Again they did not agree, but some time later a Bulgarian commercial intermediary contacted 'Abdollah and said they were in great need of the Bahman formula. I placed the matter before Samet and he agreed to make the Bahman formula available to them and then to conclude a contract.

"Initially, for each one billion packages of cigarettes we collected a kickback of $37,000, and this ultimately reached a kickback of $200,000. For each shipment of one billion packs, 50 percent of the kickback was Samet's share, 30 percent was mine and 20 percent was my brother 'Abdollah's. After several shipments of cigarettes had been brought in, we noticed that Samet was not treating us the same way and that he had tricked us. I therefore ended my relationship with him for about a year.

"The Bulgarians themselves signed the contract with the Tobacco Bureau, and I had no role in this other than receiving a commission and dividing it between myself, Samet and my brother."

'Ali Asghar Samet confessed as follows with respect to the foreign exchange funds collected:

"(1) The sum of just over £622,000 in the pocket of the Bank of London (2) the sum of $78,000 for the purchase of filter cigarettes (3) the sums of $2 million and 5 million marks are in the Zurich UBS. account (4) the sum of $150,000 was taken out of the Barclay Bank of England which I committed to the party from which it was taken and deposited into the Public Treasury Account (5) I will deliver the home that was purchased in London for £270,000. I have already paid $4.5 million from my account in the form of a bank letter of guarantee. In Tehran I used this money to buy a

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330-meter apartment, and the rest of the funds in dollars, marks and pounds are the same as what I have said."

He also said: "the funds that came from kickbacks and are in the form of property include a home in London for £270,000, an apartment on Neyavaran Street for 37 million tumans, and I loaned four million tumans out of the kickback money."

Continuing his confessions, he said: "kickbacks were taken for 'Abbas Ostad-Hoseyni, Dr. Moqadam and 'Ali Mirkhan, and my kickback share was deposited in the UBS account in Zurich and the Bank of London account. With regard to RJR, I personally received one billion free packs of Winstons and a total of $7 million, and no one else was involved in this. With regard to foreign kickbacks and the funds that I personally used, these include the Neyavaran Street apartment, the London home and the $250,000 that my brother took."

In his confession Samet stated: "I cleverly obtained $7 million from RJR, of which I deposited $1.5 million in the Swiss Bank of Credit in Geneva, $5 million in the UBS Bank of Zurich, and I brought $500,000 to Iran. I bought an office in Tehran on Yusefabad Street after Kalantari Square, and rented it to the Afaq Company."

After over 60 days in detention, in view of the confiscation of the funds in rials, the foreign exchange and the goods and the impounding of several pieces of property which he had obtained with kickback funds, on 20 Shahrivar 1372 [11 September 1993] 'Ali Asghar Samet was released from prison. After this, Mr Ne'matzadeh, minister of industries, sent a letter to the national general prosecutor at that time and requested the prosecution of Mr. Samet and an intensification of his punishment.

Dr. Ahmad Moqadam discussed how he became acquainted with Mr. Samet and his involvement in the contracts in the presence of Mr. Samet and the other defendants. He said: "In the beginning, Mr. Samet said that this company should help us and said: we want to build a hospital. I have spoken with the company's managers and they said they would not give any money, but that would donate free cigarettes. They gave a quantity of free cigarettes, and I do not know what they were used for."

In the presence of Samet and the other defendants, 'Abbas Ostad-Hoseyni said: "I obtained $2 million from the Bulgarians, half of which I gave to Samet and $400,000 of which I gave to my brother 'Abdollah; I gave $100,000 to Hasan Samet, I spent $100,000, and the rest remained for me. I obtained about £20,000 to £30,000 from the Mullins Company, some of which I gave to Mr. Samet, and I gave £5,000 to his mother. I obtained a kickback of $60,000 for an arms deal, of which I gave $15,000 to Mr. Samet. I also received a kickback of 2.5 percent from the Renault Company, of which I gave 4 million tumans to Mr. Samet."

The trial lasted from 4 Aban to 3 Esfand 1374 [26 October 1995 - 22 February 1996], attended by the defendants, their lawyers and the plaintiffs.

**Iran: Weekly on Rafiqdust, Embezzlement**

*96LA0279E London KEYHAN in Persian 23 May 96 p 2*

[FBIS Translated Text] PAYAM-E DANESHJU-YE BASIJI some time ago, following a complaint by Mohsen Rafiqdust, the general manager of the Foundation for the Oppressed; Ruzbehani, his deputy; and several others, was closed for a period of time, but was again granted permission to resume publication. But this time, the term Basiji has been omitted from the name of the newspaper. In its first issues after the resumption of publication, this journal writes in detail about what went on in the trial.

In the court, Engineer Heshmat Tabarzadi responded to the accusations of Rafiqdust and his colleagues and repeated the accusations that he had made in the issues prior to closure against Rafiqdust. In response to Rafiqdust, who had said in the court that while he has been in charge at the Foundation for the Oppressed, none of his relatives have been employed in the foundation, he said: Was the person in charge of the real estate holdings of the foundation not your brother-in-law? Tell us, what is the role of your father-in-law at Naser Khosrow Shopping Center? Is the manager of the Qods Organization not related to you? Is the member of the board of directors of Martyr Chamran Athletic Organization, which is affiliated with the foundation, your son or not?

In the court, Tabarzadi faced Rafiqdust and continued: Mr. Rafiqdust, you have violated the law, because you had hidden the embezzlement file, no matter what you want to call this action now.

He added: Mohsen Rafiqdust uses the name of the leader for the slightest problem and is now doing the same in this court. He made a claim that he is not qualified to make. Tabarzadi added: As I pointed out, there has been and there is a network of speculation around the issue and the role of Mohsen Rafiqdust through Fazel Khodadad, Sa'id Majidi-Tehrani, Kasva'i, and Morteza Rafiqdust; the history of connection with the bazaar; and the relationship with the bank through Mr. Seyf, the general manager of the Saderat [Export] Bank, and the problems are clear.

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PAYAM-E DANESHJU's editor in chief added that Fazel has not brought back one rial from abroad, and besides, the issue of Fazel cannot be a pretext to hide the crime. They brought Fazel, he embezzled and fled. They brought him back, and then guaranteed that if he pays the debts, they will leave him alone, till that problem was exposed by the Majles. Hence, if these are not crimes, then what is?

Tabarzadi suggested that a group must be formed to examine this embezzlement case and clarify the role of Mohsen Rafiqdust. Tabarzadi then presented the documents for the court to prove the accusations he has made against Mohsen Rafiqdust.

The editor in chief of PAYAM-E DANESHJU said: In an interview discussing issues related to himself, Morteza Rafiqdust pointed out that the first person he informed was Haji. By Haji, he means Mohsen Rafiqdust. Hence, he must prove to the court that he had the duty to hide this issue.

The editor in chief of PAYAM-E DANESHJU continued: Mohsen Rafiqdust claims that he has a history of struggle. It must be said that anyone who does something does it on the basis of duty, and this has nothing to do with legal duty. What has been written regarding his role in this embezzlement is backed by evidence. The fact that he had dismissed the head of security is a separate issue.

Tabarzadi said: Most unfortunately, at the time of a 150 million tuman deficit in the bank accounts, instead of asking them why they had committed these violations, Mohsen deposits the 150 million tumans in their accounts. and they start the plundering.

In the trial of the editor in chief of PAYAM-E DANESHJU, Mohsen Rafiqdust defended himself by saying: In the seven years that I have been at the Foundation for the Oppressed, no one can prove that I have employed my relatives.

Rafiqdust emphasized: PAYAM-E DANESHJU has done the most harm. Even though the court closed the magazine, its editor in chief has spoken against me in universities after the magazine was closed. He added: I am not a bazaar merchant and have been involved in the struggle for 40 years. I was arrested at the age of 12, and I was the commander of the Basijis and self-sacrificers prior to the revolution. He added: Listening to the statements of a dismissed security agent is not rational. Essentially, whatever they had written about me is a lie. The editor of the magazine must be asked why he has slandered me and engaged in a character assassination on me. Mohsen Rafiqdust said: The publication of lies in this magazine caused the people to ask me what happened to 123 billion tumans.

Ruzbehani, the deputy director of the Foundation for the Oppressed, also said in court: I have been in charge of the Shemiran Law Enforcement Committees, and we punished many people. But after this issue was published in the magazine, someone made multiple photocopies of it, placed it on the walls, and wrote that I also turned out to be a crook.

## Pakistan

### Pakistan: Ministry Reportedly Receives Threat to U.S. Embassy

*BK2207153496 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 22 Jul 96 p 9*

[Report by Raja Zulfikar]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD: The government is believed to have decided to multiply security officials around all U.S. concerns in Pakistan, particularly its missions, to counter possible attempts of sabotage.

These steps stem from renewed threats to the U.S. missions, which the government has intercepted and conveyed to the American authorities to augment their own security network.

Informed sources in the Interior Ministry told THE NEWS that the government had been informed about the threat to the U.S. embassy in Islamabad and its mission in Karachi recently.

Consequently, a message was sent to the U.S. embassy in Islamabad, where the American authorities have further beefed up measures for their protection.

Sources said the organisation, which was feared to indulge in sabotage activity, does have some links with the one that was responsible for blowing up the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad.

"There is nothing definite so far but we understand that the members of the group have been in liaison with the terrorists, who, are believed to have struck in Islamabad at the Egyptian Embassy," an official said.

### Pakistan: CTBT Stance Wavers Under 'Strong American Pressure'

*BK2207080296 Islamabad THE NATION in English 21 Jul 96 p 6*

[Article by Mushahid Hussain: "CTBT: Has Pakistan's Stand Changed?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There are now clear indications that the Government of Pakistan, presumably under

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strong American pressure, seems amenable to changing what has been Pakistan's long-standing position on the nuclear issue for the last two decades. When it came to accepting controls, restraints, inspections or signing treaties concerning any aspect of the nuclear issue, Pakistan had been stating with vigour and consistency that it would only be in a position to do so once India was willing to do the same. The argument being that since it was India which had initiated the nuclear arm race in South Asia, with its testing of its nuclear device in May 1974, and Pakistan's nuclear programme followed that of India, it would only be fair that the two countries be treated at par, equally, in a non-discriminatory manner.

While the West, particularly the United States has not sought a fair and even-handed approach on the nuclear issue in South Asia with Pakistan regularly being singled out for discriminatory treatment, successive governments in Pakistan, by and large, stuck to this position. The only exception was the apparent decision in 1989, again when Benazir Bhutto was Prime Minister, to unilaterally cap Pakistani's nuclear programme without any reciprocity from India or a quid pro quo from the United States for being a "nuclear good boy". Now as events are moving towards the resumption of talks in Geneva on July 29 for the conclusion of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), there are signs that the Pakistani government may be willing under pressure by resoling from its position that under no circumstances would Pakistan agree to the CTBT unless India also did so.

Interestingly, this Pakistani softening and sliding down on the CTBT has taken place at a time when the Indian position seems to be stronger and more categorical than before. More is also an interesting paradox that Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and India seem to share, to an extent, their respective countries' reservations on various parts of the CTBT, but while Pakistan seems amenable to pressure from the United States, India is still sticking its stand.

Some indicators of this changed position have emerged from Foreign Office statements the first being the July 11 assurance given by the Foreign Minister to Ambassador Frank Wisner that Pakistan "Would not block finalisation of the CTBT.' He did not add the rider which Pakistan normally does, of not accepting the CTBT unless India also goes along. This new nuance in the Pakistani position was reiterated by a Foreign Office spokesman on July 18 when he told the Press that "Pakistan will decide about signing the CTBT at an appropriate time, taking into account its security concerns, the final text of the treaty and the positions taken by the nuclear weapons and nuclear capable states." Again the usual proviso of Pakistan not signing unless India also does so was by a remarkable coincidence, significantly missing.

These two statements from the Foreign office are at variance with President Farooq Legbari's last statement on this issue which came in his address to the National Defence College in Islamabad on July 3 when he said that "Pakistan's signature and adherence to the CTBT would depend on our confidence that all nuclear, weapon and nuclear capable states would join the treaty." Although this statement is stronger than that of the Foreign Office, it leaves some ambiguity which seems to have emerged in Pakistan's position following the receipt of a letter to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto from President Clinton urging Pakistan to sign the CTBT. Although President Clinton addressed similar letters simultaneously to the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan, it is Pakistan which seems to have altered its stand while India has stuck to its guns. These contrasting responses to the letter from Clinton are strange and inexplicable given the fact that the reservation expressed by the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and India regarding the CTBT are somewhat similar. In his July 5, 1996 interview to an English daily, Foreign Minister Sardar Aseff Ahmed Ali said: "The text of the treaty would ban 'nuclear explosion' tests but not 'all' nuclear tests. This distinction enables countries to conduct sub-critical tests which could be used not only for ensuring safety and reliability of their existing nuclear arsenals but also for their qualitative improvement. In the name of safety and reliability an attempt is being made to create a permanent nuclear apartheid."

Indian Foreign Minister I.K. Gujral, in his statement to parliament in New Delhi, published in the Press on July 16, spoke in a similar vein: "We stated clearly that the CTBT must be truly comprehensive and not leave any loopholes that would permit nuclear weapons states to continue refining and developing their nuclear arsenals at their test sites and laboratories. The CTBT, as it had emerged (last month) did not do justice to the mandate. Without being anchored in the nuclear disarmament framework it would not contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament."

Given that Pakistan and India are virtually in the same boat with one important difference that Pakistan's security concerns far more serious than that of India, why is it that Pakistan shows such timidity and a weakened approach to a vital security issue while India's position is more principled and honourable? Gujral even went to the extent of likening the Western position on the CTBT and the advice emanating from Washington to countries like India and Pakistan to sign the CTBT as sinners talking about the virtues

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of chastity". When India links the CTBT with nuclear disarmament, that position is correct, more so given the fact that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which was supposed to lead to a reduction of the nuclear arsenals of the nuclear weapon states saw a progress in the other direction with the nuclear haves stockpiling their weapons, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

India has also stated that it will not accept any pressure that is contrary to its "supreme national interest". Pakistani officials are afraid even to talk of protecting and preserving the country's "supreme national interest", let alone take a position on an issue which is today a deterrence against aggression, a bulwark of our national sovereignty and,the basis of Pakistan's clout in the region.

Pakistani policy makers, both civilian and military, political and non-political, must understand three basic facts before they convey their willingness to renege on this issue under American pressure. First any unilateral accession to CTBT without India agreeing to do so will mean that Pakistan has bartered away its nuclear option just because a weak and spineless leadership is at the helm of affairs which cannot even protect the vital national interest.

This would be the third major compromise on Pakistan's security in less than a decade, and that too, without any quid pro quo from either India or the Unites States. Pakistan unilaterally capped the nuclear programme in 1989, provided relief to India on East Punjab, and now the U-turn on the CTBT. Even on Kashmir, the Pakistani position is dithering because the pointers are towards a Kashmir settlement that will end up preserving a status quo clearly tilted towards India.

Second as the experience of Camp David shows political scenarios in volatile regions like the Middle East and South Asia are not hostage to a static situation. The emergence of Hamas and Hizbullah as well as Netanyahu clearly indicates that the script for a Middle East peace brokered by the United States was based on an alliance between "moderate Arabs" (Arafat & co.) and "moderate Jews" (the Labour Party opponents of Netanyahu). In fact, the Middle East has seen more violence post-Camp David than before it. A peace that is unjust and uneven cannot endure, be it the Middle East or South Asia.

Third, Pakistan should take heart from the July 8,1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons. While the ICJ stated that "it could not conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in extreme circumstances of self-defense, in which survival of the state would be at stake," it clearly found that "there is in neither a customary nonconventional international law, any comprehensive and universal prohibition of the threat or use of nuclear weapons as such." The ICJ is only legitimising what has long existed on the ground and which is used as a basis of deterrence and power, projection in international politics by the big powers. It is only when Third World states are having access to similar technology, and that too, at least in the case of Pakistan, for its legitimate interest of self-defence, security and survival, the nuclear haves (with the honourable exception of China) are ganging up to preserve what the Pakistani Foreign Minister rightly termed as "nuclear apartheid".

Given this context, it should be clearly understood that Pakistan is at the crossroads of a crucial decision on which the consensus forged within the country during the last 20 years, which alternated between civilian and military rule, has existed. Such a consensus stems from the essential premise that to prevent war and promote peace in South Asia, Pakistan must have the ultimate deterrent to counter India so that the history of warn in the last few decades is replaced by a stable balance of terror on the military front which would in turn create conducive conditions for normalisation of relations between Pakistan and India. In the absence of this balance which is in danger of being undermined and eroded should Pakistan unilaterally sign the CTBT,

South Asia will face further instability and insecurity, particularly among smaller countries like Pakistan who have to face a hegemonic India which is building up its nuclear arsenal at the sane pace as the expansion of its ambitions in the region. Resiling from our long-standing position on the CTBT, would be, therefore, suicidal for the country.

**Pakistan: Leghari, Bhutto Condemn Lahore Blast; Official Gives Details**

*BK2207152796 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 22 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Lahore today, a powerful bomb blast at the Lahore International Airport killed at least six people and injured another 30, 10 of them seriously. According to reports, the explosion occurred in the passenger terminal outside the main departure lounge near a telephone booth around 1230 [0730 GMT] in the afternoon — minutes before the Karachi-bound PIA [Pakistan International Airlines] flight PK-315 was to leave Lahore airport. This place is crowded most of the time, as a large number of people gather to see off the relatives and friends. Booking offices of some of the airlines and utility shops are also situated in that area. According to the police, a powerful explosion

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device was hidden in a briefcase and placed in the building when it went off. The injured were rushed to the hospital. The blast caused heavy damage to the telephone exchange and offices situated nearby. Eyewitnesses say several persons were injured by flying glass splinters and falling pieces of furniture as they tried to flee from the crowded terminal. The Punjab governor, retired Lieutenant General Raja Saroop Khan; Chief Minister Sardar Arif Ahmad Nakai; and senior minister, Mr. Mushtaq Ahmad Awan; visited the site of the blast. Later, the chief minister visited the hospitals to inquire about the health of the injured and issued on-the-spot instructions to the concerned authorities for proper medical care to the injured. He also announced compensation of 30,000 rupees to each of the heirs of those who lost their lives in the blast and 10,000 rupees each for the injured.

Talking to PTV representative Anwar Fauri, the director general of Civil Defense said:

[Begin Colonel Tariq Saadat] [recording in progress] ... the device, as I mentioned, was a 2 to 3 kg high explosives charge, which was placed on a cemented rcc [reinforced concrete] chair in the visiting hall, and because of that there was no cratering effect and the impact of the blast was up on the ceiling as well as the booth across. It covered an area of about 30 yards all around. [end recording]

President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto have expressed deep sense of shock and grief over the tragic loss of valuable lives and injuries in the explosion. The president condemned this act in strongest words. He hoped that the injured would be looked after by authorities concerned with necessary medical treatment and would do their best to bring the culprits to justice.

Condemning this act in strongest terms, the prime minister said terrorists are out to terrorize the people and the government. But she reaffirmed her (?faith) that the harder the terrorists try to terrorize the people and the government, the harder will be the government's resolve to deal with an iron hand and determination. The prime minister said: Let there be no doubt that such acts will intimidate neither the government nor the people. The government, she said, would not compromise with the terrorists and their nefarious designs would be foiled.

**Pakistan: President Blames 'Enemies' for Sponsoring Terrorism**

*BK2307142896 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has called upon the media to create awareness among the masses to stamp out terrorism from the society. He was talking to newsmen in Lahore today after visiting the site of yesterday's bomb blast at the Lahore International Airport and inquiring about the health of the blast victims in Services Hospital. The president visited the site of the bomb blast immediately after his arrival in Lahore where the director general, Airport Security Force, briefed him about the nature of the blast and the extent of the damages. Governor of Punjab retired Lieutenant General Raja Swaroop Khan, Chief Minister Sardar Mohammad Arif Nakai, and Senior Provincial Minister Malik Mushtaq Ahmad Awan were also present on the occasion. Later, the president drove to the Services Hospital where he inquired about the health of each injured individually and prayed for their early recovery. The president also presented bouquets to the victims of the blast and assured them that terrorism would be stamped out at all costs and the culprits would be arrested. He directed the hospital staff to take proper care of the patients and provide best possible treatment to them. Governor of Punjab, provincial senior minister, and chief minister also accompanied the president.

Talking to newsmen outside the Services Hospital, the president said our enemies are sponsoring terrorism in the country, particularly in the Punjab. He said they are the enemies of humanity, democracy, opposition, and the government and want to create chaos and uncertainty among the masses. Expressing concern over the wave of bomb explosions in the Punjab, the president said it is the duty of the masses to expose the elements involved in terrorism. He said the similarities in the patterns of blast in the province and the devices used clearly show who is behind this terrorism. He said even the developed countries cannot check terrorism completely. It can, however, be minimized with the active cooperation of the masses. Replying to a question, the president said Pakistan wants to solve the Kashmir and other issues with India through peaceful and meaningful negotiations and (?as such) stands opposed to all acts of terrorism.

**Pakistan: Senate Supports Supremacy of Parliament, Constitution**

*BK2207105896 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 22 Jul 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The Senate has unanimously called for ensuring the supremacy of the parliament and the Constitution and the dignity of the Judiciary in order to avoid any extraconstitutional steps. The call was made in a resolution passed unanimously by the house last night. Raza Rabbani, minister of state for law and justice, answering a question, told the house that the Pakistan People's Party Government believes

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in upholding law and Constitution and respects all democratic institutions. He rejected reports that there is conflict or dissension between the Judiciary and the Executive. Raza Rabbani said that it is because of democracy that political parties can enjoy their right to protest in the form of train marches and long marches. He did criticize, however, the political parties that are speaking undemocratically of removing a democratically elected government. He rejected the opposition's claim that competence is not regarded as the criterion in government job recruitment.

Raja Zafarul Haq, leader of the opposition in the Senate, said that the parliamentary system is best suited to Pakistan. He alleged, however, that the government is not implementing various provisions of the Constitution. He said the attitude of the government threatens the system, adding that it has no regard for judgment of the superior courts. Senator Iqbal Haider said that the government and the opposition should work together to protect democratic institutions. He welcomed reports that opposition leader Nawaz Sharif is thinking of holding talks with the president and hoped that this would pave the way for dialogue between the opposition and the government. Senator Khalilur Rahman, Nasim Jalil, Ishtiaq Azhar and Tariq Chaudhary also called for protecting the democratic institutions. The house will resume session at 1000 today.

## Sri Lanka

### Sri Lanka: Deputy Defense Minister Updates Situation in Mullaitivu

*BK2307050396 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 23 Jul 96*

[Report by Paneetha Ameresekere—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Deputy Defence Minister General Anuruddha Ratwatte who returned to Colombo on Monday [22 July] after a five-day stay in the battlefront in Mullaitivu, gave the press a first hand account of the battle at Mullaitivu, where a bloody struggle has been going on since the early hours of Thursday, between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the troops.

General Ratwatte who directed the operations said that the troops have now linked with the camp, and had destroyed over a hundred Sea Tiger boats. "The navy is in full control of the seas off the Mullaitivu base," he said and added that the morale of the troops is high.

Airforce helicopters are landing within the camp premises. "A large number of troops have gone to relieve the besieged defenders", he said.

"I have been with the soldiers who have been sent to relieve the besieged troops and I can tell you that their morale is very high," he said. As a responsible government we cannot speculate on the casualty figures, until we exactly know, the names of our soldiers who have been killed, the minister added.

About 3,000 Tamil rebels launched an attack on this isolated military base from all sides around 1 am on Thursday (July 18), the General said, giving a background to the attack. "A few of the forward defence lines (FDLs) were then overrun after the Tigers destroyed an observation point, but troops are still holding on to the camp," he said.

"So far fifty bodies have been handed over to the ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross] by Sunday [21 July] evening," General Ratwatte said. The Tigers are responsible to only Prabhakaran, but we as a responsible government cannot give arbitrary casualty figures even of the rebels, until the camp is fully rescued, when an accurate picture could be obtained, he said.

The minister said this while responding to a question raised by a journalist who said 441 bodies of military personnel had been handed over by the terrorists, to the ICRC in Kilinochchi. The minister also discounted rumours that Kilinochchi was being shelled saying that the fighting is concentrated in the Wanni area.

Launching of air strikes into the camp by the airforce has been hindered due to the fear of hitting own troops who are defending the base, General Ratwatte said.

The minister said that reports of some of the besieged troops escaping to Anuradhapura and Kokilai, are being checked.

"This attack is a desperate face saving measure by the Tigers, who have lost a lot of international leverage in recent times due to repeated military setbacks, culminating with the capture of the entire Jaffna peninsula by the security forces a few months ago," the general said. The finances are also depleted, and this is a last ditch attempt in trying to restore their international image, the minister added.

"This attack may be a temporary morale booster to the terrorists", the minister said.

General Ratwatte discounted the theory that the camp's big guns had fallen into the hands of the terrorists. "If that is so, by now they would have been in complete control of the camp," he said.

Though the camp's main line of communication to Colombo packed up around 3 am on the night of the

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attack, the soldiers in Mullaitivu are maintaining contact with the relief forces through the hand sets in their possession, the minister said.

"Batteries have been airdropped at those points, so that the besieged troops could continue having an uninterrupted communication with the reinforcements," he said.

The minister dismissed the idea that the camp would be abandoned like the Jaffna Fort, saying that things have long changed since then. "It is also our aim to relive the exhausted troops with freshly inducted troops once the enemy is completely routed," General Ratwatte said.

The jungles of Wanni are teeming with Tiger bases, therefore the strategic importance of the Mullaitivu base cannot be dismissed. The camp provides security to the supply ships which ply on the sea lanes from Trincomalee to Jaffna, he said. "The base itself is supplied by air and by sea," the minister added.

General Ratwatte said that there is a six months supply of stores such as food, water and ammunition in the camp, effectively scotching rumours that the besieged troops were fast running out of supplies.

"The government had no prior information of this attack, all security camps in the North and in the East are susceptible to such guerilla attacks," the general said.

"Our operations against the terrorists in the other parts of the country will continue unabated, with no let down in their intensity, due to the Mullaitivu attack," he said.

Associated with the minister at this press conference were Media, Aviation and Tourism Minister Dharmasiri Senanayake, Defence Ministry secretary Chandananda de Silva, Director Information Ariya Rubasinghe and media spokesman for the military, Brigadier Sarath Munasinghe.

**Sri Lanka: 'Thrividha Pahara' Encounters Heavy Resistance**

*BK2407080096 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 24 Jul 96*

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Two landing crafts beach landed a larger quantum of troops Tuesday [23 July] around 11 am, as troops of Operation 'Thrividha Pahara' continued to advance towards Mullaitivu under heavy resistance in the sixth day of the Mullaitivu battle, an official report said.

It said that a beach head has now been established by the special forces in the general area south of Mullaitivu base. This beach head, the report said, will facilitate the movement of additional personnel as required either by air or sea. "In addition, it will also allow easy passage of urgently required replenishment for the troops advancing towards Mullaitivu."

Official sources said the Sri Lanka Air Force [SLAF] MI-24 Helicopter gunships continued to engage Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam concentrations and also provide close air support to the Navy and MI-17 helicopters flying in additional troops.

"Up to July 22 evening, the SLAF was able to destroy over a 100 LTTE boats. The SLAF helicopters evacuated 11 injured army personnel from the battlefield to Trincomalee for treatment," the report said.

It said: "Since the troops have to operate in an area covered with secondary jungle a considerable time is spent to mop up pockets of enemy resistance.

"LTTE terrorists continue to fire mortars at the advancing columns. The sea tigers keep attempting to oppose the naval crafts proceeding towards the beach ferrying further reinforcements.

"The Sri Lankan navy amidst resistance continue to operate in the area and assist the army in ferrying troops."

The Mullaitivu battle is one of the worst bloodlettings in the 13-year conflict, with both sides taking heavy casualties.

Heavy Fighting continued on Tuesday, which incidentally marked the 13th anniversary of anti-Tamil riots in Colombo and other parts of the country following the slaying of 13 soldiers in Jaffna by the LTTE on July 23, 1983. [passage omitted]

**Sri Lanka: LTTE Reports 50,000 Fled Homes Due to Army Bombardment**

*BK2407081296 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in English 23 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text]

**PEOPLE FLEE ARMY SHELLING**

More than 50,000 people living in the adjacent villages of Mullaitivu army camp have fled their homes as the consequence of incessant and indiscriminate artillery and aerial bombardment by the Sri Lankan armed forces. Angered by the fall of Mullaitivu army camp with unprecedented toll of heavy casualties, the Sri Lankan security forces have launched blind shelling and bombing on civilian targets as reprisal attack. This has caused a mass exodus of thousands of people. The villages of Mulliavalai, Thaneeruttu, Alampil, Kumulamunai, Kannkerni, Chilavathai bore the brunt of the reprisal

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attack and are now completely dMserted. The displaced population has sought refuge in the jungle areas of Oticuttan, 15 km from the Mullaitivu town. In the meantime, fierce fighting continued for the 5th day yesterday between the army reinforcement and the LTTE forces few kilometres south of the fallen Mullaitivu army base. Heavy mortar fire from the LTTE fighters have pinned down the troops reinforcement from making any headway. The troops are digging-in and awaiting further reinforcement. Intense patrolling by the Sea Tiger units and occasional clashes have hampered the efforts of the Sri Lankan navy to land more troops in the area.

**HEAVY SHELLING OF KILLINOCHCHI CONTINUES**

Sri Lankan armed forces stationed at Elephant Pass army camp continue to shell the thickly populated areas of Kilinochchi. Yesterday (22-07-96) several civilians were fatally injured in Iranaimadu area during the shelling. A child named Kannan was killed and two of his brothers were injured at about 1.30pm when shells fell on their house. [passage omitted]

**IRANAIMADU JUNGLES BOMBED BY 2 KFIR JETS**

On the 22nd of July at about 5.10pm the jungles of Iranaimadu area in Kilinochchi district were bombed by 2 Kfir jets belonging to the Sri Lankan Air Force. The jets dropped incendiary bombs with the specific intention of burning down the jungles. Many parts of the jungles were set on fire due to this bombing. Similar type of bombs were dropped in Mullaitivu district as well. [passage omitted]

**Sri Lanka: LTTE Details Casuality Figures of LTTE, Government Soldiers**

*BK2307144796 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in English 22 Jul 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The entire military complex in Mullaitivu is now under the control of the LTTE. 1208 soldiers and officers were killed in the Battle of Mullaitivu. 241 LTTE fighters, including 68 women fighters, were martyrs in the battle.

Fearing political backlash Sri Lankan government refused to accept a large number of bodies. With great reluctance ICRC accepted only 55 bodies arguing that the other 386 bodies were decomposed and unidentifiable. These were handed-over to Government Agent of Kilinochchi by ICRC for cremation. Due to extreme heat a large number of bodies were decomposed and had to be cremated in the camp area by the LTTE. About 100 bodies were handed-over to Government Agent of Mullaitivu.

Fierce fighting still continues for the 5th day between LTTE forces and army reinforcements in a coastal area between Mullaitivu camp and Alampil. (This area is about 2 km from the Mullaitivu camp.)

Though the army reinforcement has suffered heavy casualties the government is making desperate efforts to land more troops in the area with a strategic objective of recapturing the camp. Last evening, with great difficulty the government troops made a seaborne landing in the area. (Additional 300 troops were landed) Our fighters have surrounded the troops and pounding them with mortar fire. The fighting continues.

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